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THE SORROWS OF IRELAND"

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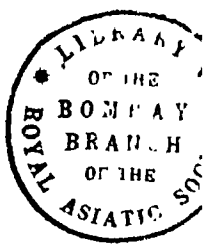
By "PAT"
AUTHOR OF "ECONOMICS FOR IRISHMEN"



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CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	PROLOGUE	5
I.	THE IRISH PROBLEM AND HOW I STUDIED IT	7
II.	HUNTED INTO FAME	13
III.	DERIVATION OF THE PROBLEM	20
IV.	"EDUCATION"	28
V.	MORE "EDUCATION"	36
VI.	THE LEAGUES	46
VII.	SINN FEIN	54
VIII.	FISSION	63
IX.	POLITICS	75
X.	RELIGION	85

PROLOGUE

AFTER ages of service and pain,
with her mark on the world and her failure at home,
in the door of the Empire we have Erin still doubting,
the smile looking out and the tear looking in,
from a retrospect rare in its beauty
and bravery, hope and romance;
still distrusting herself and distrusted for that,
making fetters of freedom, and crimes of caprice;
esteemed for her follies, and cursed by her virtues,
while nursing her vices, unaware of her strength.

Will she ever come in?—She can never go out;
and her destiny rests in destruction or friendship,
the choice leaving no room for doubt.
I could lie to her lovingly, trade on her tenderly,
market her anguish, and live on her cheers;
but I tell her the truth and I ask her for nothing
unless to live on and serve her as truly
as she has served all but her own.

THE SORROWS OF IRELAND.

I.—The Irish Problem and How I Studied It.

THE national mind and will do not belong to the nation, but rather to a few privileged persons and groups, who thereby control the energy of the people to live on it, which makes progress impracticable, not merely in government, but also in life. That is my definition of the problem, but I defer the demonstration to tell first how intimately I have been forced into acquaintance with the data.

Up to now, Irish interests have found expression only in party arguments, cancelled by one another on equally bad evidence, with political pleading a kind of profession, and with the people as the clients on both sides of a cause that ends only with their money. I present no plea, but I assert a judgment, and submit the facts on which it is founded.

Six years ago I had two unexpected dignities inflicted on me, the ownership of our farm in Mayo, and with it the headship of our tribe, which required me to plough, to know agricultural chemistry, to sympathise with turnips, to understand pigs, and to be a village wirepuller, all on a training as a London journalist, chiefly in theatrical criticism. I lived at Brighton,

among classical concerts, church parades and lawn-tennis, when the news reached me that we had "lost the land", which meant destitution for my crowd of affectionate incapables; and though I could liquidate the liabilities to regain possession, that was all I could do. Smart essays on the drama in the West End could hardly appeal to agricultural capital in Connacht; and as to farm work, the crowd were even more useless than myself, for I was ignorant enough to learn, and they too full of the dead knowledge that kills intelligence. It was well I had no more money then, for I see now that they must have lost it for me as they had lost their own.

Farther to complicate the position, they had a small war among themselves, neither side acknowledging the headship of the other, though both would acknowledge mine, on the assumption that I was a wealthy man, who "got his money aisy, sittin' down all day wid little bits o' paper"; and who, therefore, might provide luxuriously for an indefinite number of definitely unproductive persons without bothering them about work. Work was not "respectable", and I was; therefore, I could not expect people to work. I belonged to the "educated" classes, who always looked down on the workers, and what was "education" for but to evade work? As became an "educated" man, I was ignorant of the soil and its uses; therefore, bound to keep clear of work as a necessity. A man might defy a convention or overcome a necessity, but who could face a combination of both? Clearly, I was expected to elevate the social status of the tribe to the level of complete uselessness, as the minimum essential to our respectability—and to political economy. If I told them I was poor,

I could not be their bond of peace, besides damaging my credit, my authority, and their means to live.

On the other hand, there were things to the credit of the tribe. I knew from the old people that not one dependent on them had been allowed to perish in the famine times, in one of the poorest regions, and that some of my direct ancestors had permanently impoverished themselves to save the lives of their neighbours. In essentials, and in spite of strife, the race ought to be still the same; what if I could discover something of that fine old altruism in them? My Spencerian cult seemed to say to me, "Let each individual of your tribe work out his own destiny", even where there was no apparent destiny to work out; but De Quincey called to me with the dead grandfathers, "Trust any faculty you have rather than the understanding", which meant putting sentiment before reason. Knowing that there was not one in the tribe who would not risk his life for me if required, how could I desert them, but again, how could I take a course so likely to make my life as useless as theirs? The possibility of an economic and sociological experiment was fascinating, and fit pursuit for greater lives than mine; but I was obviously ill-fitted for it; and then, what of the sunny days and the perfumed evenings at Brighton, to be given up for loads of soil on my boots, and of water in my clothes, among turnips, potatoes and November rainstorms? I might resume the life of the tribe to lift them up, but they might pull me down instead, and I was only one among many of them. I might go away, and send them money, but they could hardly use it less ruinously than they had used their own. I might give them up altogether, and return to my own world, that would seem

unnatural, with no better prospect than the workhouse for half of them. I might stay there, earn money from elsewhere, and capitalise them; but capitalising the incapable did not seem "economic". Only one thing was clear, and that was negative—I could not take them out of their world into mine, for I had no Promised Land to suit them, and could not tell what golden calves they might develop on the way. *Besides, I did* not like to alarm my neighbours in Brighton.

Still confused by the indecision of these complex uncertainties, I paid the debts, took possession of the farm, and gave myself up to a period of Keltic drifting and observant indolence, obeying circumstances instead of creating them. The land was good for the money in any case, and I wanted the interior data that time might give to see the lines of least resistance, meantime feeding the tribe from the "little bits o' paper". Then I saw some strange things, though they are commonplaces to me now. My neighbours spent twenty-two days to do two days' work. They had beasts worth £6 10*s.* at two and a half years old, and I ascertained that, with no more than a little thought in breeding and feeding, they could have them worth £12 to £14 in two years. They dealt with poultry and the rest of their live assets in similar fashion, and they fed their horses in idleness while doing horse-work with spades, keeping idle also the money that would buy the few implements by which the horses could do the work. They paid large sums in freight alone for "manures" that might as well be stones, and they had not the smallest notion, even empirically, of the chemical process in the fertility of the soil. They raised the best bacon in the world to sell at 3½*d.*, and imported far inferior stuff to eat at 7*d.* They had a Department of

Agriculture and technical instruction to teach them, at great cost, but its vice-president had written about religion in a book, and they looked with suspicious contempt at any application of science to industry. For about four months of the year they did no work, but ate up the margin that might extend their footing next year; and I noticed that they emigrated most when the idle season was over, and the spring work about to begin, as if determined to ruin to the last farthing the land they loved so dearly, and for which they were all so eager to die. With intelligence so ignorant, and with energy so ill-directed, values were naturally low, especially the value of human life, and I found I could employ a youth fit for general farm work at £9 a year and his board. What if working power, so abundant and made so cheap by its own inefficiency, could be made efficient? The possibilities of an economic experiment were becoming less completely negative; but how could I get the initial capital, even assuming that I buried myself in the bog as a vicarious atonement for the sins of the fathers?

More waiting for what would not turn up, and then I went to my banker, assuming in my innocence that the farm would be good for an overdraft, if only a fourth of its value; but he asked me, "How can you expect a bank to lend on a security that could not be realised?" The farm was there, I explained, and he could sell it if I failed to meet the liability; but he smiled, looked me over, and added—"It remains with the United Irish League to say whether a farm can be sold or not. Why not join the League, or start a branch of your own for a buffer against the other branches, as the graziers and land-grabbers do?" He showed me how wide and how perfect was the dominion of the

League in keeping capital away from the land, and he seemed to accept its power as its justification; but he could not see the absurdity of an economic pioneer joining a society to propagate destitution. I came home, wondering greatly at the "national organisation" that "saved the people" by destroying the industry on which they depended.

The League had made it impossible for me to get capital on such terms as would be accepted anywhere else in civilisation, and the hindrance applied to the whole country, because any farm, at any time, might be put outside the pale of the banker, not to mention the higher rates of interest always necessitated by the political risks. My case was the case of the nation. The League having made it impossible for me to get capital, what if I should make capital at the expense of the League, by writing about it? The suggestion was a desperate one. It would mean war, and I only one against a million; but there would be no dishonour in defeat, and the value of triumph might be incalculable, in manuscripts as well as in turnips.

I went to work, and now the farm is four times as productive as it was, on no more labour, with a pound for good farming in place of a shilling for good agitating. It secures my savings, it demonstrates my doctrines, it is my sanctuary when I am hunted, and it excites the "Freeman's Journal" in leading articles to deny the existence of the farm itself, while admitting the existence of the turnips grown on it. If I succeed, Land-Acting and the "Freeman" stand for economic lunacy; but I have already succeeded, and so it becomes necessary to deny the existence of a piece of the earth, lest it should discredit the "National Policy" of saving the people by destroying their

means to live. Peasants may starve or emigrate, but "great men" must not be found out. I have repeatedly objected to becoming a "great man" myself, preferring to tell the truth, and to take his bread from no man, but that is not enough. Penniless, unknown, ignorant of the work, and desiring to "lead" nobody, I am guilty of having shown how Irishmen may live well in Ireland, for which I am never to be forgiven. Lord Dudley and his Commission "hope to visit the farm" this summer, but the press must not report the visit, lest the existence of "my patch" should be established—that is our "national press" in Ireland. What must be the life and character represented by it? In the next chapter I describe some of the methods that have been employed to save the people of Ireland from the grave national danger of having a successful farm among them.

II.—Hunted into Fame.

THERE was no house, except for the tribe, and, unable to live at an hotel, I put up a tent, with a big lamp, which looked through the canvas like a cone of fire across the lonely hills in the night, causing quaint speculations as to my purpose, among others the idea that I could raise the devil, and cause storms. But my power over the winds was discredited when my own tent was blown away, and my wicked books ruined in the midnight rain. Twice I was wrecked, but that was nothing to the storms in store for me.

So numerous and so capable, we depended wholly on

my journalism, and my journalism depended on things happening worth money in print, which were very rare; therefore, I decided to make things happen. The life around was rich in dumb tragedies; what if I could make these articulate? Wherever there were men and women, there ought to be "copy", if but in the organised silence that made thought and expression a privileged monopoly. If there was no public opinion to be expressed, the absence of it called for criticism. I established a sort of new industry in the neighbourhood, namely, telling the truth, in which I had little or no competition, and by which I very soon made many things quite stirringly articulate. I found my neighbours spending about three times as much per acre on drink as on rent, led by the publicans and the priests to make the rent less, that the drink might be more. I went to Mass regularly, listened to political speeches delivered for "sermons", and heard one reverend gentleman threatening the people from the altar to get money from them—"If I find anyone that does not pay, I'll take care to see that he is exposed; if I find anyone that does not pay more than a shilling, I'll have his name sounded all over the parish." What better "copy"? After hearing that, I came home and read the Sermon on the Mount. To save the Church of my fathers from such great scandal, I became a kind of amateur archbishop, uttering periodical pastorals to the faithful, recalling them to the faith—and making the price of a nice cow out of each pastoral for myself and the tribe.

Instead of putting up a memorial window to me in the church, as he ought to have done, our parish priest called a "back station" on us, which meant that, without even consulting us, he had invited the public

to be confessed and entertained at our expense. "Stations" were an ancient custom, and I should not have opposed an ancient custom; but the "back station" was one "to the good", out of our turn, and meant that we were "black sheep", guilty of some mysterious crime that must be purified peremptorily. The crime had not been mentioned; it might even be unmentionable, and, in the public mind, it attached to myself personally. Many and ingenious were the theories of "the blow" that had fallen, but the more thoughtful said it was because his reverence did not like my literary style. I was quite prepared to submit myself to judgment, even for doing good, if guilty of it, but how could I see my guilt unless I knew my crime? Some said a new sin had to be invented to meet my peculiar case and "keep me down" with the rest of the parishioners; but there was no doctrine in the faith, and no canon in the law, that could impose punishment on me without my knowing why. What was my crime? The priest declined to tell me, and I declined to be punished. I told him that there would be no "back station" on any terms, but that if he cared to cancel his insult with an apology as public as the proclamation, I should be pleased to invite him for a special station, to make us all as good as possible, at our convenience, when I had repaired the poor old house, then hardly habitable. Next Sunday he announced that our "back station" was "postponed", and then I told him there would be no station, "back or front", until I pleased. The day came, but no priest; the people lined the fences to see me grow horns, but my horns never grew, and so I missed being the most interesting journalist in the world.

Perhaps the poor priest imagined he was doing right,

for it is not easy to keep the mind alive in a place like that, and I was an awkward kind of man to have in the parish, accustomed to think, and so difficult to kill. The spectacle of two men claiming the right to think in one parish was intolerable. Before me, there had been only one, and he had apparently forgotten how to think. Where one man makes thought impossible to his community, he thereby makes thought unnecessary to himself. What need for thought where no one thinks? Dictation taking the place of reflection, character and conduct become mimetic, faculty atrophic, and life sinks below its means, making men marvel at the normal. Then it is so much easier to denounce than to understand; at least, I desire no less charitable interpretation of my friend and his "back station".

Now I was guilty of "an insult to the clergy" in not permitting them to insult me, which boded my quick ruin, and the means were at hand to realise the prophecy—it is so easy to prophesy where the prophet has the means to bring about his own predictions. The local branches of the League, under the direction of the priests, called on the public to boycott me, though I had done absolutely nothing against any rule of the League, but had rather asked its leaders to give up land-grabbing; neither had I done anything whatever against the religion, but rather asked the priests to be decent Catholics, and to behave like Christians. The League had [illegible] quarrel with me, but it was the priests' instrument, and I had refused to accept his punishments without trial. The people were ordered not to speak to me. They were ordered to burn my writings. Local newsagents were ordered not to sell any paper publishing me. Every community has its thieves, and our thieves were let loose on me. Had

not the priests desired my destruction, and why should not the thieves have their share of the spoil, especially when they could appeal to "holy religion" and "the Lord's anointed" to justify the theft? The priests had ordered the boycott, and what could be better boycotting than robbery? The Catechism condemned theft, but it said nothing about theft as a necessary part of a boycott ordered by the priest to destroy a wicked intruder. My letters were regularly opened in the post, and the mighty British Empire, on which the sun never sets, was quite incapable to keep its penny contract with me. I began to develop a most interesting "reputation". The number of my deserted wives in British and continental cities multiplied exceedingly. The numbers of my irregular offspring in various countries were sent to editors for whom I worked, with details much uglier that I cannot write them here.

There was no lack of "copy" now, but there was work of peace, and for the first time I realised fully what the critics meant by "objectivity of mind". I had created subject-matter, but too near as yet to see the perspective for the profit, and I felt as if a crimeless Ariel trying to describe his own execution for food to save his children. "He's about finished now", said the local leader, who prospered on drunkenness under the clerical smile.

Time, Truth's old friend, led me gently from the fury I had raised, so that I could look back to see it whole and calmly, listening the while to the round-robin resolutions that called me "foul", with priests presiding over the conscious falsehood to make religion the instrument of slander; and in this better view of the position, I turned the resolutions also into "copy", at five pounds apiece, saying to the leader as I showed

him the cheques, "Keep up the resolutions, and I am a rich man". There were no more resolutions, and some declared that I could not only raise the devil, but that I was the devil himself. The ghost walked again, and the turnips grew, but I was still too near the fun to see it fully.

Having passed the parish priests through my hands in this way, I moved on among the bishops, rendering them most valuable assistance to make Catholics of the clergy; and then, in a lucid interval that I could neve quite understand, Providence made me editor of Catholic paper for peasants, in which capacity I wro so true to Christian doctrine that the priests we greatly alarmed, especially when I quoted the Pope t them on their own duty and the liberty of the indivi The local bishop was so kind as to cause a who issue of my paper to be burnt, for preaching Cathol liberty, but he did not burn any of the staff, and th the circulation ran up so remarkably that I passed among the cardinals, helping them to look after th bishops. Had not the Pope himself told me in an e cyclical that it was my duty as a layman "to conce myself with the interests of God and souls", and w it not obviously in "the interests of God and souls" t make good Catholics of the bishops, that they migh attend to religion, and leave purely secular matters t secular men? As if recognising the greatness of my mission, the cardinal relieved me of my editorship, and set me free to write "Economics for Irishmen", which has already done so much towards the spiritual discipline of the clergy; and when the book came out he advertised it free for me by abolishing the paper, as if determined to make my income worthy of my great work.

I fear our hunting season is now nearly over, and I look back with special gratitude to that P.P., with his "back station", who first established my fame as a quarry, and led me to see the money value of my running powers. When it was found that he could not catch me, the sport began to "draw", and I took care to get the whole of the gate-money, with the publishers and editors as my gate-keepers. Until my time, our hunted ones had all run very foolishly, in direct lines, which made a gate impossible, and set them towards the sea, never to return; but when I found the bishop on my trail I felt so confident that I ran in a circle, keeping only a small distance before him, so that he could not make short-cuts, which added much to the excitement—and to the gate. Then the cardinal came on the track. I "broke" in the most orthodox manner, and round we ran. It was only a short sprint, but very profitable. I like this new game, and the higher the stakes the easier the play.

Now I have passed them all through my hands, except the Pope, but he will not play, and I know he has need for a deputy in these islands to help him look after the cardinals. I ought to add here that there is nothing whatever in Catholic doctrine binding a cardinal, a bishop or a priest to hunt me for trying to make good Christians of them in the interests of the Church and the country, and there is nothing to prevent me from describing the hunt, so long as I do it in the proper spirit.

That was how I made things happen, turned them into "copy", financed the farm, and brought out the real facts behind the Irish problem. Each "run of the season" has been worth two or three additional cows to me, and I am more fit to run than ever. I am also

becoming more respectable as the numbers of my cows increase, and it is pleasant to be respectable. I must protest, however, against being described as "a man of genius"; in fact, I am almost the only man I know in Ireland who is not a genius. I have merely looked among the facts of life which are so common that men of genius will not look at them. If these facts afford entertainment in themselves, I cannot help it, and their sociological significance is not at all the less serious. In the chapters that follow I try to show how much too serious it is to be treated too seriously.

From beginning to end the peasants refused to boycott me, even when called upon by the priests to do it, and I believe it is the only case of the kind in Ireland. The boycotting was done almost wholly by the criminal and publican classes, who are always the priests' allies in killing intellect to dominate life as their stock-in-trade. Not one priest, bishop, cardinal, or publican has alleged anything either in my published work or even in my private life against the Christian religion, which makes their hostility all the more interesting.

III.—Derivation of the Problem.

The national mind and will do not belong to the nation, but rather to a few privileged persons and groups, who thereby control the energy of the people to live on it, which makes progress impracticable, not merely in Government, but also in Life, of which government is never more than a minor function. I

consider briefly how this is illustrated in the failure legislation, in the uselessness of institutions, and in ruin of the race.

The country is necessarily committed to the democtic destiny, but democracy is practicable only in so as opinion is free, and we have practically no free nion in Ireland, unless for private expression. thority takes the place of free opinion, and precludes thought on which opinion must be founded to be of efit in political affairs. If there be any real thought political affairs, it cannot be the thought of the ple, who have conceded all right of such thought to e authority; and it is only the thought of the le themselves that can have practical significance e democratic meaning. Hence the legislative elephants, the gifts of Demos, which eat up nd, while the people decline to learn what use it be made of the beasts.

bout a hundred gentlemen go to Parliament from and, but in the strictly democratic and constitutional se Ireland remains unrepresented in Parliament; ause these gentlemen are elected, not by the people, by the persons and groups to whom the people e given up their right of political judgment. There two parties, one seeking office and obeying the ionist dogma, the other seeking subscriptions and eying the bishops. Mr. Redmond's party have to te as the bishops order, even against their Home ule allies in Great Britain, thereby shelving Home ule; and the average Home Ruler in Ireland dares not tter a syllable against it. Meantime I have it from he intimate friends of their lordships that exactly hree-fourths of the bishops themselves are anti-Home Rulers, dreading that a Democracy in Ireland might

replace ecclesiastical dictation by the democratic proc
in political affairs. That is why so many Unioni
are now becoming Nationalists.

Not long ago thes bishops' members of Parliam
presented a candidate in the democratic way, for Lou
without asking leave, and immediately the ecclesiast
forced them to accept their own unpledged candid
instead. If they differ from the bishops on the pa
pump, the subscriptions stop, and out they go. Par
left some able men, somewhat trained to anal
political agencies, and they had made free opinion
some sort almost possible when the compact clos
the split contracted them out of Parliament for e
and replaced them by village publicans less capab
criticism and more obedient to the bishops.
then these Ishmaels of Ireland have been perse
almost to starvation under "religious" direc
Their business, where they had any, has been boyco
to ruin, and some of them have been reduced to th
of journeymen workers in their advancing age,
their employers repeatedly coerced to discharge th
One alone that I know of has up to now been able
keep alive in Ireland, but only because he is emplo
by a Protestant, who declines to obey the bishops.
is now getting too old to earn his living, tells me t
he sees nothing ahead but the workhouse, that M
Redmond "cuts" them in the street, and declines
acknowledge their letters to him. These are the m
who stood by their chief with Mr. Redmond in Con
mittee Room No. 15. Is the cruelty part of the con
ciliation compact with the bishops? A gentleman lik
Mr. Redmond would naturally prefer to do the manl
thing if he dared; but the ecclesiastics foretold th
destruction of his comrades, and they had the mean

ady organised to realise the prediction—that is the
uliar advantage of the modern prophet.
n the other hand, the Unionist dictation, so long
so lately a positive ascendency, has become a ne-
ve wail: "If the Catholic 'leader of the Irish race
ome and abroad' is so much in terror of his own
iops, what chance could Unionist Protestants have
he mercy of a legislating majority led by him?"
veen the two mobs, there is little room for a
on, unless a dying one; less still for religion, unless
political weapon, and none at all for the freedom
opinion essential to practicable democracy. With
mind and will of the nation annexed by the group,
energy of the people becomes an ecclesiastical
; the most "ameliorative measure" may be
by a shrug of episcopal shoulders, and religion
must vanish with the victims who go away over
orld to make room for theologians and bullocks.
e ecclesiastical system, compounded of modern
urce and mediæval cunning, is perfected to meet
at every point, and as the bishops direct Ireland
arliament, the parish priests control her in Local
ernment. For instance, at Claremorris the local
sts have openly forced the Guardians to pass a
olution that they will appoint no clerk who has
"a character" from "the priests of his parish";
d Mr. Conor O'Kelly M.P. declares that one of the
verend gentlemen has explained it, "to keep out
rotestants and people of that kind". Mr. O'Kelly
as also called it "moral assassination", and already
Mother Church" is at work to unseat him, while the
eader of the priests throws out a hint from the altar
that the town may be "cursed" unless "the faithful"
ut down "the worst ruffians this side of hell". In

reply, Mr. O'Kelly explains that, while in gaol, he
the Bible through, and found not a word in it a
"the Claremorris waterworks". Claremorris di
from other places only in that what is hidden
where has become obvious here, and so comes
ecclesiastical cat out of the political bag where
man is found plucky enough to pull the string.

Whatever the future of Ireland, little good can
until the Irish themselves face the hidden forces
make justice as well as democracy impracticable ar
them. If they want a Parliament and a Governm
why not have opinion and the courage to express
Parliaments cannot work without opinions, and Go
ments cannot be administered by "moral assassina
alone. Ulster is supposed to be better, but I k
Protestant Nationalist of Belfast, one of many, wh
been discharged from his employment three tim
five years, and every time admittedly because
political opinions. His Orange persecutors c
understand his going over to a tyranny even gr
than their own. During my six years in Ireland I
not met one Unionist who would not be a Home R
if the Home Rulers put the priest in his place, but
priest has their education under his heel, backed
British authority. How can Parliament or Governm
from anywhere, do anything on democratic lines fo
people who are incapable of opinion unless vicariously
The Irish problem is solving itself fast, by the ruin
the race, mainly self-inflicted; and it will be easy
govern Ireland when there are no Irish. That appears t
be the outlook of all British statesmanship at presen
with the apparent approval of Mr. Redmond, his party
and the ecclesiastics controlling them; but on the
other hand, statesmanship can deal with no peopl

[redacted]pt through their mind and will, which the Irish given up to their privileged persons and groups. prospect is hard for one of this stricken race to mplate, but I know that if Ireland is to be saved, by the truth, and that I can present the truth to nly by detaching myself, even in feeling, that I see her problem purely as a problem.

ave presented the political side of the problem and at more length, as the simpler course, for its value in illustration; but the other side is much er, much more fundamental, and much more com-

It is easy to see how the want of free opinion in cs degrades the democratic process; but it is less o see the enormously greater importance of this dominion in making men and women unfit to heir bread in their own country. If a man's nd will belong to another, and not to himself, rgy and its products also tend to be lost to him, e it is only in directing his energy by his own and will that he can make the expenditure of his y reproductive in the interests of his own life. g up his mind and will in politics deprives him f citizenship, but in the greater and more funda- l application, it deprives him of food, home, ness and life itself. What of a nation of such ?

o the credit of the Irish nature, the people have ays been peculiarly devoted to two of the primary ntials of civilisation, namely, patriotism and moral ponsibility, debased in our own times under the mes of "politics and religion", and further debased their conflicting organisations under both heads. ople wonder why the Irish now attend so little to e numerous other interests of life; it is mainly

because their devotion to those two primary princ
has been menaced so long and so cruelly that a ru
excess of their energy and resource has been ass
to the defence, shaping the national habits and act
accordingly, with excesses of crude combativenes
of nervous piety that leave so much less of mind
force for other affairs. War in any form want
strong man to the front, with a free hand, and
leged to judge for those who put him forward if
to serve them well. Our battle is over, at le
religion, but our theological strong man remain
at the front, pretending it is still war in order to
tinue his privilege, wasting strength on the pole
frontier, where it is not wanted, at the expense
the other interests, which want it very much.
also taken the political command along with his
to keep up the illusion, as the fighting men of
themselves on the thrones of their employe
turned peace into tyranny, to be deposed in thei
With the race dying out as fast as ever from p
causes, the need for the political fight remains as
on the intellectual plane at least ; but our
Reverend Dictator keeps the army on its knees i
petual prayer lest a rival warrior should find hi
among them.

Derived to such a heritage, coerced to assume
nothing matters much but religion, and carefully tra
to give up their judgment in this, the Catholics
Ireland now carry the vicarious habit of mind even
butter-making and bacon-curing, in which the aver
man must always depend on other judgment than
own. One asks, "Is this creamery going to be work
on Nationalist principles?" and in a town of Mayo t
people dare not hold a meeting on the killing of th

vithout the approval of the priest. A people who
ip their mind and will in all the greater matters
ot have mind or will for the smaller, and it is the
egate of the smaller that makes a nation's bread
utter. A people trained from the cradle to give up
mind as a moral duty cannot well have the use of
mind in the business of life—unless in some other
y, where the emigrant is free to use his mind in
to live. No one can find anything to justify this
Catholic religion, but no one can help finding it
administration of that religion in Ireland.
th the mental resources of the nation thus locked
in the ecclesiastical warehouse, labelled off in its
is departments, so many "Leagues" are required
nage the stock-in-trade, in the ecclesiastical
st; and the human machines employed to work
eagues see their own privileges menaced by the
who dares to think for himself in any concern
ver. The existence of his nation depends on him
essentially than on any other, for he most shows
to make Faculty of use to Life; but the ware-
men and their masters lay down the law that
lty shall be of use to Privilege only, and let the
n go to America, taking even the religion along
it. In this way Life is kept "organised" for the
enience of its own accessories, instead of having
accessories for the convenience of Life; the accidents
set to govern the essentials, the fundamental is
tated by the superficial, the vital directed by the
cadent, and the social organism sinks to atrophy,
ding in the workhouse, the lunatic asylum and the
nigrant ship.

I will next try to illustrate this strange Irish process
a few specific subjects, such as Education and

the Leagues, in each case keeping close to the
that the national mind and will do not belong t
nation.

IV.—"EDUCATION."

I OWE my success in life largely to the neglect
early education, escaping from Ireland while
mind was yet young enough to survive. I had
one year's regular schooling before my escape, t
can never forget it. When an inspector was hea
in our region, the floor was swept, and the maste
his clay pipe ; but we lost the good man, and got a
who slept in the afternoon, wrote love-letters whe
woke, and got the children taught by one an
Some thought that her school hours ought not to
been given to sleeping and love-making ; but no
word will be heard about her from me, for I know
how my salvation was endangered had she rem
awake, though no marks are given for sleepine
teachers' examinations. Only two distinguished
have ever left our school, and the other achieve
distinction as a thief.

"Alma Mater", dug into the north side of a n
hill, shed cold tears on us in the winter mornin
as the small rebels came over the bleak landscape
the rain to sit coughing and shivering in their w
"clothes". Our single room was always a scene
mud or dust, according to the weather. Our heati
problem was met by putting as *many* as *eighty of u*
into a cubic spa*ce for twenty-five, and the sanitar*
system consisted in a row of stepping-stones on whic

e might walk round the institution without getting gged, if we were very careful—the stepping-stones re outside the walls. Many of us saved the passage-ney to America by dying. The manager was the est. I never heard that he was in any way dis-sfied with our accommodation, and of course, if he satisfied, no one else in the parish would dare to plain, even if we had to swim to school.

public servant who had the approval of the priest t sleep during official hours, and while our lady ned, we lay on our backs on the benches to see could reach his feet farthest up the wall, a game in a girl named Mary always took the honours, to the length of her legs, which she could lift above her head among the maps. Once the er woke too soon, and brought down an angry across the speckled shins, whereupon Mary got led in the map of the world, dragged it down, lunged one of her legs through the Indian

nteen years later I revisited "Alma Mater", nd her charmingly unchanged. At least a sweeping must have been pushed under the where the children's feet had shaped it into a potato field prepared for seeding. A class arefooted had "In Memoriam" as the lesson ay, the teacher declaring that she could never make one of them understand a line of it; and they were all peasants, the only suggestion of ure I could see in the school was beneath the . Tennyson, carefully edited by an unliterary was meant to "finish" them for cooking and rrying in America, but neither the Imperial purse-r nor the ecclesiastical conscience-monger could

think of anything to make them useful at home. Wh
should the State make rebels efficient? I think mys
that if you fit a man to live happily, he may find reb
lion less attractive than happy living; but that wou
require more thought than Britain can give to the Ir
problem, and then we have the clerical manager in
way, with the British Government so dependent on h
because the Irish rebel is so afraid of him. Why sh
a priesthood make uncertain by education an obedie
made certain by ignorance? I think myself th
degrades religion, but that would require more tho
than Rome can give to "the island of saints
scholars", which is still treated as "a missio
country", among the "barbarous" communitie
worthy of full affiliation, notwithstanding the hero
sent against the freedom of Italy and the "barbar
loads of Peter's pence collected out of our ign
poverty every year. A rebel race that can survive
an ancient and deadly combination of Rom
Britain, the two strongest powers in the world,
hope for much if only they were led, or were c
to be led, in constructive directions; but here
the priest again, ready to smash Mr. Redmond'
at the National Convention had he not
dropped the attempt to give the people the c
their own children's education. While the pri
trols education, he can keep the people ignorant
to have his own power perfect, and that is w
Redmond asks England for a free Parliament, w
dares not ask the priest for a free school. This N
Convention of ours has been most intensely inte
—in the things never mentioned. Broadly spea
the only things worth discussing in Ireland ar
things never discussed.

n another part of our parish I once witnessed a ool visitation by the clerical manager, a fat man small eyes, big hands and a purple face. The er turned pale, met him at the door, and exe- l a painful movement for a salute. His reverence d in, not noticing it. Perhaps it had not been ently abject. Evidently much alarmed, the trotted round in front of him, and executed a ore painful movement: It was not a bow. I saw anything else quite like it, even in "The ". In a drooping posture, the "man" stretched arms, level but limp, like the wings of a squab ng food; then he gave way at the knees, as if name of Jesus, but sank much lower, as if to edge the relative importance of his visitor. only a child, but I could never forget the I think of it whenever I read of the slave who puts his head under the master's foot; is the standard of manhood and of moral rovided and perfected to-day by the British nt and by the Irish priest for the youth of

takes our education money from us in taxes, nds it back to the priest, subsidising our in the name of education, and making our anity itself a curse to us, while "the leader of the ce at home and abroad" demands our self- nent, and dares not mention our self-education. itish play the game well, but it is a dirty, un- game to play, and I am sorry to see it adopted ople whom I like, who have always been fair to d among whom I have spent the only pleasant of my life. Yet, in the conditions, it is a choice n bargaining with rebellion and defeating it by

subsidised clericalism ; and so it is likely to conti
until the Irish themselves see their way to pres
their case on some higher level than clericalism an
terms more practicable than revolution.

A typical manager in our region used to "sell"
schools to the highest bidder, getting £60 to
for himself from each principal appointed, with
portionate amounts from the assistants, and a pref
to the monitor whose mother brought the bi
hampers of fowl, eggs and butter to the priest's k
during the years of candidature preceding the
year appointment. A shop-keeping relative
reverend gentleman negotiated the transaction
the teachers all felt bound to him, too often
own price.

There was a victim who could meet the pu
money of his school only by instalments,
was forced to accept the shopkeeper's bill, at
cent., as for "shop-goods"; and after man
having paid £55 in discharge of £70, he foun
over £40 still to pay. I knew him well. I
papers, and I knew others who had seen th
they did not want to grow horns. This sh
boasts that he gives £2,000 to each of his dau
on her marriage. The teachers go on levelling
wings and bending at the knees. The pupils p
to escape from "Holy Ireland" as soon as ev
can.

Such is our re[illegible] "Romanism" in British h
and "the National Will" cannot well prot
plundered schoolmaster while Cardinal Logue di
the dismissal of editors for saying that parents
to have opinions on the education of their chi
We call ourselves a nation, and we demand I

e, but we have not left alive in us enough nationality manhood even to mention the tyrannies of our that make rule of any sort useless among us. e are fit for Home Rule, why can "our gifted er" not tell the priest that we are fit for Home cation?

ave mentioned only a few of the facts that are n to me directly and personally. Are they ld? I find that the clerical influence in educa- has increased considerably since I was a boy. hey peculiar to a specially unhappy district? them to-day everywhere I have been in rural d.

ate of things even worse appears to prevail in ustrial schools and reformatories under ecclesias- ntrol. The head of the Christian Brothers at a ge place tells me he does not know of one tizen ever turned out, and Dublin ladies declare d the inmates "covered with vermin". As w up, their work becomes profitable inside, but yer goes on paying outside, and not long ago d a letter to the Chief Secretary to get one of t. If they are not got in, the ecclesiastics may money, and so we find "procuring agents" at o fill the dens. The famous Dinah Hely has a of ninety-two in eighteen months, but Mary s beats her, with one hundred and two in a single 1897. The "profit" is so great that it "pays", oloy agents!

the report of the Ruckley case, Judge Boyd es: "It is admitted that the practice prevails arge extent of getting up bogus cases for the strate for the purpose of having a large number ildren committed to industrial schools that legally

ought not to be there, and thereby a fraud is co
mitted upon the authorities and upon the ratepaye
. . . It is a case of pious fraud, and I will t
leave to say that a fraud, as it is, committed un
the guise of piety, is the worst kind of fraud there
Why are the ecclesiastics so anxious to populate th
vicious places? Educated people who have given n
time to the subject have no hesitation in alleging "w
sale ecclesiastical plunder"; but the Government o
empire on which the sun never sets must have a me
of some sort through which to "manage the Ir
and for the present the priest appears to be the
convenient, since he alone can curb the souls of
in the imperial interest. The facts of the Ruckle
were put before the Lords of the Treasury, show
"two years' grants had been fraudulently obt
but the Treasury did nothing!

What do they teach? Here is an example, f
Thirty-seventh Report of Dr. Fagan, the Gov
Inspector:—

"In two of the largest schools for boy
visited, I found classes of from thirty to
gaged in the monotonous and not too highl
tional occupation of knitting stockings, under
of their only counsellor and friend, a mothe
woman. This constituted their only hand-a
training for several hours daily, carried on in
of the cases for several years—in one inst
met a lad who had spent six years at this wo
knitting stockings by hand. I have lately w
through piles of such official information, and
do more than touch a few representative items he

Some years ago the late Dr. McKeown publis
series of remarkable letters, which have stood criti

from which I have made the following rather ructive comparison :

		Ireland.	Scotland.
Pupils on rolls		770,622	756,658
Average attendance		478,224	629,038
Annual cost per head		£2 11 9	£2 11 8
Illiteracy ...	men	15·1 per cent.	2·16 per cent.
	women	13·2 ,,	3·27 ,,
Schools clerically controlled ...		89 ,,	?*
Number of schools		8,684	3,623
Teachers ...	(nearly)	14,000	10,845
Average income	Principals†	£98	£173
	Assistants†	£63	£108

figures are all recent, and have to do with tary education only. Irish schools have increased than double the number considered necessary e population was double what it is now ; but sum for salaries does not increase, and has to ed among the increasing teachers. I have ard a satisfactory reason for it, except that the of each teacher in the Irish parish is worth at a year to the priest's private income, and I e poor parish in which the priest's increase is 4 to £35, out of this source alone, in less than ation. My table cannot tell of such important rations as the social position of the teacher, but l 1,161 university men in Scotch schools from niversities alone, not including Edinburgh ; and this I will put a reverend neighbour of mine, in who hunts up his schoolmasters, and drives them k on his farm on Sundays, without either board es.

per cent. of Scotch schools are under elective boards, and majority of the remainder are under churches.
Lowered since then, while Scotch salaries rise.

That most valuable book, "Forgotten Facts of I
History", by Dr. Ardill, shows how ancient,
steady, and how treacherous a British instru
against Ireland our priest has been, never deadlier
to-day; and now comes our imperial Calvin from
land, under the cloak of "the Scarlet Woman", bu
the priest at Ireland's expense with one hand
trying to trick him out of the schools with the o
but out comes the red hat, heralded by Mr. Tim H
and in two hours Mr. Redmond turns from No
formist Radicalism to the Crozier, with many sp
ready to prove that he had never wavered from hi
ception of the national mind and will as eccles
assets. Only those in touch with the strings in
know how near his destruction Mr. Redmond
everybody sees that the Devolution Bill was ch
not meant to open the war that must some d
between Nationalism and the hierarchy. Th
the better, for religion and for Ireland.

V.—More "Education."

I HAD better be very grave in this chapte
last thing I wrote on higher education in
has caused actions for libel against the "Time
James Henderson and Dr. Traill, Provost of
College, Dublin, with an immediate prospect of
the "Spectator" and my old friend the "Fre
Journal". This was brought about by four l
intelligent innocence which shows how easy i
make things happen in a country where everybody

"think" as somebody else pretends to think; but when a man has put big forces in motion, he must watch the curve of his circle, and I do not want to be more than sympathetic historian to the battle I have begun. Besides, I understand that the judges object to any assistance beforehand in determining the merits of such a matter.

Strange as it may seem, we have in Ireland an "Education Reform Association", with a piquant pamphlet called "Secular Control of Secular Education", a proposition so entirely true, and so obviously sensible, that nearly everybody is bitterly opposed to it, especially the professional representatives of Truth and Sense, who know the value of a monopoly in the springs of life. We have also in Ireland people with University degrees who believe, as Dr. Traill quotes it, that the Governing Board of Trinity, of whom he is a member, "divide the surplus revenues of the college among themselves at the end of the year", and that even the students are well enough aware of it to call it "a scramble for the coppers". Dr. Traill does not like that, but the pamphlet suggests it, and evidence before the Education Commission asserts it. Mr. R. J. McMordie M.A. is treasurer to the Association, and my four lines, based on the pamphlet, led Dr. Traill to [redacted]ttribute "a tissue of falsehoods" to him in the press. [redacted]e think it looks like calling Mr. McMordie a liar, Mr. McMordie does not like this. They are both [redacted]testants, of different schools, and I am not a Pro[redacted]tant. Myself and Cardinal Logue look on, though [redacted]m slightly different standpoints.

[redacted]It is the first time that a single "Idolator" has set [redacted]r two camps of "Heretics" upon each other, and [redacted]lid not expect it so soon after having flung the

proverbial apple among our two camps of "Idolators"; but there is no "Catholic" enthusiasm over the Protestant conflict, for if the critic look in at Trinity to-day, he may look in at Maynooth to-morrow. The specific charges against Trinity remain to be proved; but, in any case, Irish education all round is little better than plunder of the taxpayer to enslave the citizen for the privilege of the priest. Just now, however, we have got the mobs so mixed that they have less time for the older and more fatal strife of Protestant v. Catholic, which has long been no better than a trick to fleece both folds for the benefit of the bell-wethers, who have chewed in comfort together while keeping their hungered followers butting each other to death.

The formula shifts to "Ireland v. her Own Tyrants", and so my new chaos turns out to be essentially cosmogonic. Out of it must arise new men, neither Roman nor British, but really Irish, emancipated from the deadlier tradition, with mind and will to make a new Nation out of new Life. The cleavage is already deep enough to cause prophetic bleating among the bell-wethers. Life already asserts itself against the tyranny of its own trappings. Sane men sicken of the tomb as the explanation of their existence, and strong men tire of eternity as a substitute for food while the preacher goes to Harrogate against indigestion from ove[r] feeding. When her dictators fall out, Ireland co[me] by her own. The change affects Life all round, [for] once we get Irishmen free to think and to will in[to] interests of their own lives in their own country, t[he] government will no longer "pass the wit of man"; but education is at the bottom of it all, and that is w[hy] the dictators hold it for their own, as the shortest [cut] to dominion over the national mind and will. Th[e]

too, is the reason for organising "religion" against ideas. I was not a month in Ireland when Father T. A. Finlay, the Castle Jesuit, caught the meaning of my purpose, and told the Irish public that I had come "from London pot-houses". Now he knows better.

From the facts of Primary Education, it must be clear that the Primary Schools cannot well prepare people for the Intermediate, though costing more per pupil than in Scotland, and it is not less true that the Intermediate fail to link with the University, though financed at the public expense by a proportionately liberal capitation; but the failure of the University to link with Irish Life, and to react for the country's advantage, is illustrated as clearly as either, in the fact that we have only two engineers in Trinity College electorate, while the Provost admits to me that a very much larger number of Trinity's clergymen are employed outside Ireland than inside. A professor highly placed in the governing body of Trinity argues with me that education for export is a legitimate function of the University, endowed at Ireland's expense to educate the Irish people for Ireland; and we may take it that the same is the case as regards the other Irish University and the various colleges. Maynooth has a sort of charter of its own, and the Reform Association tell us that the college "turns out a surplus over Irish needs of 100* clergymen annually for service in Great Britain", not to mention those for other countries or those dismissed by the bishops for attempting to

* Bishop O'Dea's evidence to the Commission does not seem to agree fully with this. Assuming the total surplus exported to be 100 a year, the loss to Ireland is over £150,000 a year, not to mention the money value of 100 useful lives at home.

enlighten the people, of whom I could give a fairly large list from personal knowledge alone.

Thus the Primary School does not reach the Intermediate, the Intermediate does not reach the University, and the University does not reach Life, though educating so largely, out of Ireland's poverty, for the benefit of other countries, where the individual is free to apply educated faculty. If the Irish people may not have mind and will, then, of what use can education be to them? Men without legs do not buy boots.

They may not yet see what I mean, but they prove the truth of it by emigrating to poorer opportunities. Our "education" is an immediate cause of our emigration, and such illiterate* regions as we have in Dr. Healey's diocese are the only ones that have not fallen in population since the great famine, while the better lands are cleared of men, far less from landlordism than from the people being more inefficient than the bullock in getting wealth from the soil. Could this be so if mind and will were free to apply educated faculty in the business of life? Illiteracy maintains the population on the land not good enough for beasts, and "education" depopulates the lands too good for men, while the priest preaches to the bullock, and permits no one but himself to express opinions on the phenomenon.

The Intermediate system was started "to give money and other prizes to successful candidates at annual examinations, with 'results' awards to the school for passes and prizes secured by the pupils". It is con-

* In one recent instance nearly 70 per cent. illiterate of the whole population *over five years of age*. This comes within the responsibilities of the Archbishop, but he never mentions it, though he takes an active int[illegible]

trolled by one of our forty-five or more Boards, with £110,000 a year; and the members are carefully selected on sectarian lines to satisfy the organised bigotries that we call "religion" rather than to make educational uses of the money. The members are twelve, five Catholics, four Episcopalian Protestants, and three Presbyterians, with the cleric leading each group, and five clerics in all. The laymen are selected to agree with the clerics, and there would be an immediate scream against the best educationist in the world if his introduction were to disturb the mathematical adjustment of the sectarian balance. It is obvious that the groups are arranged to watch one another, lest anyone should annex more than its share of the national mind and will, from which it follows that education must be a secondary consideration. If the nation could rise above the creeds in national matters, a Board like this might be worked for education and for religion as well; but the creeds rise above the nation, so that the money meant for education goes to accommodate sectarianism and to turn Christianity into strife.

On the Catholic side, the Intermediate schools are almost wholly controlled by "the ecclesiastical person", not merely in management, but also in emolument, making it automatically impossible for the country to develop lay teaching power on the higher plane; and now the monks and nuns are rapidly "scrambling" for the Primary plums also, taking the schools that are worth having from lay teachers, while the Government goes on "training" these teachers for export at Ireland's expense. It must seem strange to many British minds, but there is nothing strange in it when we come to consider the imperial policy of "managing

the Irish" through the bishops, as admitted by Lord Randolph Churchill, and confided to us by his son.

From the first, the system turned its young victims into grant-earning machines, at the expense of health, character and intellect, with the prodigies packed full of useless "knowledge", the educational average very low, and its methods often actually degrading. The Reform Association say: "This system, of course, lent itself to cramming as its best feature, and as its worst, to the supplying to the teachers in many cases of the questions which the examiners intended to place on the examination papers. . . . Many of the children had been forced to hand back to the teachers the amount of their prizes. On the strange ground, however, that many of the prizewinners might have parents who would take and mis-spend the money, the money is now all given to the schools"—that is, to "the ecclesiastical persons". Who are these "teachers"? They are the "holy men" and the "holy women" who have "given up the world" for religion. Is it any wonder that the Irish people give up Ireland for emigration?

We have names like that of Sir James Henderson to the above assertions in the Reform Association's pamphlet, but we need not go beyond good Catholics for the ecclesiastical working of the Intermediate system. Miss Mary Lambert Butler, the novelist, quotes the case of a Southern convent where the daughters of the farmers and shopkeepers were "taught how to get in and out of a carriage, and how to issue orders to the footman"; and as to the young men "educated" by the monks and priests, Most Reverend Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, says "that nine-tenths of them are lost, and that they are now going to

swell the ranks of the déclassé, without an education that is worth a button to them for any useful purpose". How can his lordship expect education to be of use to a people whose mind and will are sacerdotal assets under an appeal to Heaven?

The sacerdotal traffic in our education is incomplete at one point—we want "a Catholic University". A few minds and wills still escape, alive and free, causing uncertainty; therefore, the British Treasury must make up the gap that lets them loose, perhaps putting an end to nationality as well as to educational freedom. Maynooth was founded for laymen as well as for clerics, and it is estimated that Maynooth has pocketed over £2,000,000 from the State alone; but the priest very soon pushed the layman out among the "heretics", when he had nowhere else to go, and then threatened to refuse him absolution if he went to "the God-less colleges". Defrauded of his inheritance in Maynooth, and denounced if he went elsewhere, the layman has drifted to destruction, with the priest still as his "guide and protector", in religion, in politics and in butter-making. Above all, the layman must not develop a character to "protect" himself. What a layman, this of ours!

To meet that position of affairs the Queen's Colleges were started, a fairly complete system of University teaching, well endowed, inexpensive and free from tests; but the bishops, unable to dominate it, determined to destroy it, and again left the layman at large. Here is Mr. Davitt's account of the facts: "Twenty-five bishops met. Twelve voted for the colleges, and twelve against them. The odd bishop, possibly the most uneducated of the twenty-five, has deprived Catholic Ireland of University education for several

generations". Who gave absolution to the twelve bishops that voted for the "God-less colleges"? Now we must have "heretic" money for another Maynooth, and anyone who wants to know what it will do for us has but to look at the kind of human rat that goes burrowing in our provincial towns with a University degree from Jesuit teaching in Dublin.

Good-natured people plead that, "After all, isn't the priest the most suited to control education?" Certainly, because he has made the fitness of anybody else impossible, but the nation that cannot develop and support lay faculty in education cannot possibly last. Then, as to the priest's fitness, listen to Bishop O'Dwyer again: "Almost all secular education in Ireland is in the hands of the clergy. . . . The clergy that teach have never received a true education. There are no laymen competent to teach at all. . . . The clergy come out of Maynooth . . . absolutely deficient in all classical education and in all scientific and mathematical education. . . . They are deficient in . . . a something which cultivates a sense of honour and of right judgment with regard to the affairs of life." That is what Maynooth has done with the £2,000,000—what will Dr. O'Dwyer's Maynooth priest do with a "Catholic University"? The above extracts will be found in "Secular Control of Secular Education", from the bishop's evidence to the Royal Commission. They are painful admissions, especially when we reflect that not education and life alone, but religion itself also, must suffer in the keeping of such men as Dr. O'Dwyer describes. No layman of our time has revealed proofs so entirely complete of our moral and intellectual ruin by clerical dominion; yet these are the clerics who continue to dictate the election and the

voting of the Boards of Guardians and the Irish Parliamentary party. If the clergy really desire the useful education of the Irish people, why do they not apply themselves to the primary and secondary systems, now so corruptly inefficient, and so very expensive, under their own control; and while ignoring all that, why do they agitate for an increase of university education, of which we have already such an obvious excess? One reason for it is that they have control already of all but university education, and want to get control of that—at a time when the social welfare of the world finds more and more need to set the university free from ecclesiastical direction of the secular curriculum. Another reason is that the noise about a Catholic university diverts attention from the vastly greater need for honesty and efficiency in the schools, and I do not believe at all in the sincerity of the very anti-Irish plea that the Catholics must "lose their faith" by associating at college with their Protestant fellow-countrymen. Whether they lose their faith or not by education with the Protestants, they most certainly lose their country by education with the priests, who keep them eternally trembling between perdition and emigration. The assumption that Catholics cannot hold their own in touch with Protestants is an obvious insult to both themselves and their religion, but the insult is not more obvious than the ruin to Ireland by keeping her people thus divided, weakened and embittered—in the name of "religion"!

VI.—The Leagues.

CATHERINE CASEY, an old and solitary widow, had a little farm near us, and, unable to work or to pay wages, she was always in trouble, helped in many ways by Michael Waldron, the best worker in the region, and the most prosperous man. He had lent her money, which she acknowledged but could not repay, and then she was evicted by the landlord, after which Waldron took the land, not permanently, but to get his own out of it, or, in the meantime, to give it up whenever she or her friends made good the balance. He never took interest on the loan. He offered Catherine as much of the land as she could work, and also the house, all free of rent while she lived, which would have obviously been better for her than a farm the title to which she had definitely lost in any case; but "public opinion", which was the opinion of one man, directed her to refuse the offer, and to "invoke the god of battle", a gentleman of the name of O'Brien, who, at the time, happened to live near Croagh Patrick, in our own "County of Mayo, God help us".

Without accurately ascertaining the facts, the local priest denounced Waldron "from the altar", on what text of Scripture I do not know, but with such influence of his sacred office that Waldron's wife was called foul names in public, his children mobbed by the other children on their way from school, his cattle poisoned, and his crops destroyed or stolen. Some followed him to prevent his buying or selling in the fairs and markets. The Waldrons were isolated as if lepers, in a gregarious community, where the freedom of the social instincts was almost the only source of sane

recreation; and the immediate instruments of the organised torture were their personal enemies and rivals, who saw in the league and in the "sermon" a way to pay off old scores. In fairness to Ireland, it ought to be noted that this barbarism is usually executed by a small gang, mainly from personal motives, under the influence of priests and their politicians. The bulk of a civilised community can seldom or never be deliberately cruel, and most of the neighbours were always sorry they had to treat Mick Waldron in such a way. He had always been a good neighbour, a good Catholic, and a leading Nationalist—but he had disobeyed the priest in demanding his money or security for it against the dictation of the league.

A man of character, he stood by his rights, and after having done their worst, they summoned him before a "court" of the league, where he said: "I don't want the land, but as you have carried the boycott so far, without considering the facts, I'll never surrender unless I get my money and the costs you have caused me." They offered him part, and to this he answered: "If you want it settled, put your hands in your pockets, and I'll give a contribution equal to the highest." He had defied the priest, the "court" refused his proposal, Mr. William O'Brien held "a magnificent demonstration" there, and so great was the eloquence that some of Mr. O'Brien's mob pulled poor Waldron through the river. The usual police hut was put up in the village, and the patriots built a hut for Catherine Casey, just outside her former fence, as if to assure the utmost unhappiness for herself and for the Waldrons.

We had the sequel in the depth of last winter. The widow's hut stood by the river at a bend in the bleak road, about half-way between Kilkelly and Kiltimagh.

Driving past in the rain, I saw the hens crouching against the door, and looking hungry. Perhaps they had not been fed, and if not, what of the old lady? I looked through the little window, and thought I saw something queer. Then I went on and told the police. They opened the door. On the floor was a mass of dark ashes, in the outline of a human body. At one end was a tuft of grey hair, at the other some charred remains of a boot. A little apart was a human shin-bone, and there were bits of bones among the ashes. Catherine Casey had been burnt to death in her solitude, and that was all that remained of her. She had died without a priest. There was a priest to "lead" her in the war, and to keep her out of her old home, but none when she had to face the Almighty. Mr. O'Brien did not come to the wake. No one came. The remains were left in their solitude for days and nights until her relatives came from a distance and removed the ashes. It was all a result of the "National Organisation" to "save Ireland", and the newspapers said little or nothing about it. Will anyone tell me that a people so full of sympathy and of generous impulse as the Irish could act like this if their religion had been presented to them in its integrity?

Left to their better selves, our peasantry are incapable of such inhumanity, and I am old enough to remember how kind they could be to one another before they were "organised", when Fenianism still preserved their manhood against Clericalism subsidised by the State; but now "organisation", directed by priests and their politicians, takes the place of humanity among them, and they leave a poor old woman to be burnt in her loneliness, but [illegible] untended through the

nights, and her soul to the canons of political expediency. In return, "organisation" gets Acts of Parliament to pass the ownership of the land from a set of incapables to a set still more incapable, obviously lessening the support of the soil to the nation in proportion, while emigration goes on unchecked, in the most progressive of all the ages, and at the gates of the world's best markets. The bullock, left to his better self, and improved by the Government, increases his efficiency, helping to remove the people faster; but there is no one to improve the people, and they cannot hold the land while the bullock knows how to make more per acre out of it than they. Already the agrarian speculator is at work buying up the new fee simple to extend grass on the site of human life that has been "organised" out of existence, with the increasingly efficient bullock as his instrument. It is a matter of cause and effect, obvious, inevitable: the bullocks are not forced to join the league, and they are not "organised" to horn each other out of the country or to kill the best representatives of their race; they have no "religion", no "leaders", no Parliamentary fund. They are allowed the free use of their mind and will, without a cardinal to dictate their education on Asiatic lines or a Parliament to dictate their digestion.

I need not say much more about the United Irish League. The Waldron case was a bad one, but every parish has its records of the kind to show the people the danger of exercising mind and will in the business of life. Where organised tyranny takes the place of individual freedom, terror becomes a virtue, and cowardice takes the place of character; down goes the nation and up goes the bullock. The political

priest is the chief agent in bringing this about, and I make myself unpopular by suggesting that good Catholics ought to be worth more to the Church than the best of State-bred bullocks, owned by wealthy "heretics", to displace the grass-green faithful. Even without having studied Ricardo, we all know how human efficiency on the soil tends to increase its value; but, to cheapen fee simple, the league deliberately discourages such efficiency, as a "National policy". For the shilling gained here, it is obvious that at least a pound is lost in the inefficiency dictated to gain it, and then the little gain is for the agrarians only, whereas the great loss is for the nation as a whole, who have a right to the use of their country, and are deprived of that right lest it should appear that our "great men" have made a mistake. The "Freeman's Journal" is so much alarmed at the fourfold productiveness of my own little farm as to deny its existence, from which it follows that my own existence also must be a source of discomfort. Thus it becomes clear and simple that the league co-operates most effectively with the Government to drive the Irish out of Ireland, which is the only solution of the Irish problem at present "within the region of practical politics". How a man with Mr. Balfour's subtle intellect must smile to himself at the episcopal publicans "elected" for us by the bishops, since they destroyed Parnell, to take the working of our "democratic system" into their own sacred hands!

The Gaelic League, the Phœnix of Parnellism, [illegible] from the wreck that substituted the parish for the nation in the manufacture of our "great men", resenting Gladstone's historic refusal to treat with the erring "chief" [illegible] tion the greater [illegible]

the Irish bishops in his destruction. Parnell had been picturesque, even by contrast in the coldness of his Saxon silence, and he had been able to hold his tongue enough to be thought very wise among a talking race, while deriving the best of his force from less glorified Irishmen, and exploiting his advantage through the inherent Irish reverence for an aristocrat; but the parish publicans substituted by the bishops were not inspiring, in spite of the imprimatur, and Nationality, still alive, looked for a new form of expression. The soul of the nation, also still alive, could not be wholly articulate through grocery and alcohol, however parliamentary, however episcopal, and the Gaelic League came to substitute organised philology for parish parliamentarianism. Now Ireland was to be "saved" by philology. We Irish always move through a single faculty of the social organism at a time, as if, with our endless multiplication of "great men", we could never produce one with enough common-sense to see that the strength of any organism tends to be that of its weakest essential. With our mind and will as our own, we might produce such a man, but not yet.

I wonder how many Gaelic Leaguers know who began the Gaelic League. Nearly twenty years ago Mr. John McNeil, now a distinguished Civil servant, was found among Gaelic manuscripts in Dublin libraries, and his love for the fine old stories of our heroic age soon gathered other enthusiasts around him. The Gaelic League resulted, to revive the fascinating language and to make Ireland Irish, but though Mr. McNeil is still on the council, he is too thorough a worker to be heard of very much, and the league has developed its own type of politician, largely female and revolutionary, keeping Ireland under the disadvantages of

rebellion, without the smallest possibility of any of its advantages.

A naturally gifted people, not permitted to think, will seek some other form of activity, and so we are great organisers, with a sort of subconscious hope that organised appearances may dissemble the absence of intellectual realities. We know, or at least feel, that we could think if we dared, and translate our thought into constructive action, potential in normal progress on our own ground ; but since we may not work from thought through action to progress, we must proceed from authority through organisation to appearances. Very soon the Gaelic League became brilliantly articulate out of proportion to its volume and influence. Who, considering it from outside, could think that it has never touched the peasantry, who make three-fourths of the nation, and who represent our sole survival of native speakers? The leaders of this league know as well as I do that its growth is limited precisely by the will of the priest, and that it has practically no existence at all except in the few towns large enough to maintain some sort of independent public opinion. If mind and will were possible, the Gaelic League might flourish everywhere, but in that case it would not be necessary, because Life itself could then take the place of its organised appearances. One cannot help admiring the ability with which its real weakness at all times has been disguised, or sympathising with its brave leaders in the continued decline that reveals the cruel truth. Dr. Douglas Hyde still makes heroic speeches, though fewer, and tells us that Maynooth is the most national place in Ireland ; but he is silent about the wonderful change that takes place in the brave young curate before he becomes a parish

priest and puts his sacerdotal foot on the political cerebellum. One official of the Gaelic League has already been driven out of Ireland for refusing to desert his post at the bidding of a priest, and the leaders have not dared to raise a finger in his defence. The combination of Catholics and Protestants for Ireland's sake has always been regarded with suspicion, and now that same priest proposes "a good Catholic council" for the league, with the Protestants left out. One of the best revivalists in Ireland has left the league because he found it "an organised tyranny".

Languages are the products of peoples, like other instruments of civilisation, but our new philosophers still preach that the Irish people are to be made by language, and saner counsels must wait on the course of the latest fallacy. Since organisation takes the place of ideas, the accessories of Life tend to take the place of Life itself, and the social organism emigrates to escape from the philosophical tailoring that dictates its nakedness. The league has made an arbitrary market for "literature", and now we have "great writers" in the Irish language, which they know badly, after having failed to write English, which they knew better. They are assumed to be so overburdened with "soul" of such peculiar structure and texture that nothing but Irish could adequately articulate their inherent greatness; and yet not one product of all this elaboration has been found worth translating, even into English. A preachment of some kind runs through every paragraph for its predominant justification, precluding the human interest which alone can make literature, in any vital and artistic sense; and the result is rather a bad copy of a prehistoric apparition, laboriously contrived to illustrate the very inconvenient acuteness of modern

psychology. If the individual mind and will were allowed freedom to work, we could soon get ourselves represented in things done, instead of things merely dreamed or argued, but that is not yet, and the Gaelic League, with the boundaries of its influence carefully determined by clerical preference, is another obvious proof of the subjugation of Life to its dominant definitions. For a time it looked as if the new movement might make ideas possible, but there is little hope when a pioneer, because he is a pioneer, can find no one to employ him, and is forced to go to America, while the leaders are as much afraid of the dictation as Mr. John Redmond himself.

As the Gaelic League arose out of the helplessness of Parnellism, Sinn Fein arises from the helplessness of the Gaelic League, but since this is our latest substitute for leave to live, it ought to have a chapter to itself.

VII.—Sinn Fein.

THESE two words, meaning "Ourselves" and pronounced "Shin Fane", were first put together by Mr. Davitt to tell Ireland that a nation, like a man, had better depend on herself, which a people so clever could have discovered long ago had they been in the enjoyment of their faculties, and not dependent on "organisation" for what they must "think". In the countries where people are permitted to have minds, the boy learns these domestic truths at his mother's knee, and he enters on the rivalries of life with a clear eye on the

inspiring spaces ever vacant at the top, where effort is so much easier, building the growth of his country unconsciously in his own; but in Ireland, where Cardinal Logue gets men dismissed, and their industry closed, for saying that parents ought to think about the education of their children, every process of life tends to be "organised" into abnormal self-consciousness, and even "Ourselves" becomes a political formula, once again substituting artificial definition for normal impulse as the motive power of life, with a new set of "great men", and a new set of greater women, to live on us by the new "movement". Our Madame de Staël has gone to Paris for good, finding our manhood too feeble or too shy, but Sinn Fein remains a petticoat philosophy, with a feminine peevishness in its beard, and with a female disregard for the restraints of strength. The aim was individual and intellectual; the result is an addition to the collective tyrannies over intellect, and beauty inspires valour to a penny weekly scream. All real intellect is of necessity individual, and can be organised to advantage only with its own volition, if at all; but in Ireland we set up the organisation first, and bid intellect obey, which is bidding it to depart or perish. Sinn Fein is the latest organised proof of the impossibility of intellectual existence in Ireland.

Mr. Davitt did not mean rebellion by "Sinn Fein". He meant rather to set the people studying such far deeper questions as these: "How can expenditure on education help a people who dare not make use of their minds when they are educated, and how can they help being poor and weak while they are afraid to think about their means to live?" Raw, young rebels came to ask him what he meant, pressing him to heroic purposes, and he pointed them to his rifle, asking, "Have

your rifles?" No, they had not thought even of that—had they been permitted to think at all, they might have thought of something more useful. If any man could discount the face value of Irish rebellion, that man was Mr. Davitt. After "drawing off his forces" from the attack on Chester Castle, he had found himself on the Liverpool landing-stage with the exact total of three-halfpence to breakfast his army; and he had been through the star-spangled melodrama that is still coloured in the American kitchen, on its too green background, for the benefit of the Parliamentary Fund —"the greater Ireland beyond the seas" has been one of Ireland's greatest curses at home, always pushing her into the mud, and leaving her there, while Uncle Sam kept our warriors, male and female, still cooking his chops, carrying up his bricks, and preparing his cocktails. For twenty years Davitt lived behind his revolver, and the oath of his intended assassin still in his ears since he had carried a majority of the Fenians in favour of Parnell and against revolution. Incessantly suspected of treason for his hatred of the classes, and of loyalty for his sympathy with the masses, he groaned to his grave between British manacles and American murderers, while "the greater Ireland across the seas" sent home enough coppers to do the utmost harm, but not enough of anything to make the smallest compensation. When he saw that constitutional methods were the only hope, he showed as much courage in defending his convictions as he had shown in his three-halfpenny commissariat at Chester, with the good of his own people for his sole aim all the time, and the charge of "traitor" so much harder to bear than that of "rebel"; yet a cushioned female in the council of

Sinn Fein sneers at him now for having "abandoned the ideals of his youth".

Sinn Fein started for constructive thought, but the priest was still too strong for that, and it continues as an artillery of chiffon, with a claw in the fur always strong enough to excite enmity, and always weak enough to assure the contempt of the enemy, while a whole people are discredited in silence for the hysterical fanaticism of an over-articulate few. We can all see that Calvin's latest toy for "the Scarlet Woman" might have been much more valuable but for the vagaries of Sinn Fein, again sacrificing the practicable to the impossible; and yet the rebel is the priest's last asset in bargaining with the British purse for power over Irish life. The Sinn Fein rebel who hurls defiance at the mightiest of all the empires turns pale before the village curate and his sway over the territories of eternity; therefore, he is held in the clerical leash, to be slipped or strangled according to the terms of the traffic between the imperial purse-holder and the parish conscience-monger. Hence the imperial compact that continues between Calvin and "the Scarlet Woman". He wants votes and she wants money. He wants to rule the empire and she wants to rule Ireland. She does not mind his nonconformist conscience so long as his purse is big, and he does not mind the flavour of her "Scarlet" draperies so long as she helps to keep him in office. "The clergy that teach have never received a true education", says Bishop O'Dwyer, and there can be "no laymen competent to teach at all", seeing that "Almost all secular education is in the hands of the clergy", who "come out of Maynooth . . . deficient in a something which cultivates a sense of honour"; yet Britain puts all our

educational resources into their hands, and then complains on finding the national character a little twisted, out of line with the simple, straight instincts of the Saxon. Would it not be better to get directly at the God-given humanity of the Irish layman, and let education, in his own control, reveal to him what his real interests are? As a human being, he wants to live, as well as he may, and his own mind, once at his own command, would surely show him that his interest was not in the eternal enmity of an impossibly strong neighbour, who is ready to be as much his friend the moment friendship can be sanely trusted. Besides, self-education would afford the truest of all experience to prepare for self-government, and if the layman still persisted in leaving the democratic process in education a clerical and rebel asset, well, then let him do without Home Rule. So long as the village publican who administers local government may have his business ruined by a vote on the parish pump against the priest's will, we cannot expect much improvement in that direction, and such facts are commonly quoted against Home Rule; but make the schoolmaster a free man, with an income worthy of his work, and his pupils must become free men, so numerous that the priest could not possibly destroy them all. Give me the control of Irish education for twenty years, and I will give you a new nation.

As the Gaelic League arose out of Parnellism, Sinn Fein, in its present form, arises out of the Gaelic League, through a minority who felt that man could not live by philology alone. They were young, and the chaos of Parnellism, revealing the multitude of their mud gods, had set them adrift from the constitutional idea; but immediately the priest did his best to annex

them, and now most of their leaders are among the most priest-ridden in Ireland, while a smaller section drift towards atheism and revolution. The grip of the priest remains the strongest, of course, and now our Sinn Fein rebel has to climb the ladder of life with his head in a Roman halter and his feet in a British fetter, jointly operated; but instead of telling straight why he cannot climb, as he might do if he had mind and will, he starts "movement" after "movement", all to end at the will of those who pull the strings on both sides. At a suggestion from Westminster, a string is pulled in Italy, by an Italian, and our rebel turns pale at Ballyhooly. He tugs bravely at the British fetter, but he dares not agitate the Roman halter, which holds the more vital part of him, and whenever there is the smallest sign of "freedom" for him at one end, he is pulled to prompt submission at the other. Yet Sinn Fein was started for "Ourselves Alone", to "make Ireland Irish", to turn her mind on her own destiny, to get action out of ideas, and to get progress out of action; and the trembling leaders still pretend to be in earnest, ready enough to make Ireland Irish in so far as Britain is concerned, but still more ready to make her perfectly Italian at the first touch of the Ultramontane button. In Sinn Fein, as in everything else, the Irish, not daring to think or to act on their thought, start "organisations" as the alternative, and the priest gets control of every organisation in proportion as it becomes strong enough to be of use to him. Ideas would be better than organisations, but here comes education again, and I have already shown the impossibility of producing a schoolmaster with an idea where "almost all secular education is in the hands of the clergy", who have had "no true education", and

are "deficient in a something which cultivates a sense of honour". In telling the truth so plainly, Bishop O'Dwyer has done a service to his country, and a greater service to his religion, which cannot gain by being made an instrument of tyranny and ignorance, as his lordship shows it to be. The Church that cannot face its own moral diseases cannot live, and the strange thing is that the other bishops, knowing the facts as well, remain silent.

Our rebel's religion, in its integrity, affords as much freedom as any other, and more than many, but the priest will not let him know that, which is enslavement in itself; and the laws under which he lives afford more freedom than any other laws under the sun, but the priest's elected leader will not let him know that, which doubles his enslavement; and the priest supports the dominion of the leader so long as the leader supports the dominion of the priest. Between the two Ireland escapes to America, and so complete is the dual tyranny that Sinn Fein hardly dares to mention it, threatening British misgovernment, but ignoring the peculiarly Irish tyrannies that make it inevitable. Good government under the democratic definition is for ever impossible to a people so long as they are incapable of free opinion among themselves, and Sinn Fein is our newest organisation against free opinion in Ireland.

Under the Sinn Fein theory, Ireland is now to shut herself out from all parts of the world (except one city in Italy), at a time when all the progressive peoples are increasingly anxious to get into closer touch with one another, and to learn from one another for their mutual advantage. "The Island of Saints and Scholars", enlightened for sixteen centuries by "the only true religion", is to put on the second-hand

clothes cast off by Shintoism in Japan to make that country a first-rate Power in a few years. We are already practising a sort of self-imposed Protection, under which everybody is to buy Irish commodities from everybody else at more than their market value; and Sinn Fein denounces any thinker viciously who asks where is the net gain to the nation from taking so much out of one man's pocket and putting it into another's. The multitude of increased prices paid may "create employment" for somebody, and that is "seen", as Bastiat would put it; but it is not seen that the sum of the unnecessary excesses is a sacrifice on the part of those who pay, with a proportionate liability to lessen employment somewhere else; and it is not seen that the only safe basis of industrial development is the efficiency to produce and to offer equal value with the producer competing from outside. We must not mention the industrial inefficiency of the Irishman. It would be "unpopular", and the penny weekly scream may not always be able to depend on subsidised fanaticism. We have now been "reviving" in this "organised" manner for some time, but our industrial total still goes down, and must go down until we become as efficient as those with whom we have to compete.

My main objection to Sinn Fein is that it is so immoral. For example, it preaches a gospel of hate in place of Christian feeling, and it drags the nation down from the plane of intellect to the plane of passion, which is cruel as well as immoral, seeing that it means uncompensated pain, not to mention the deadly results to life and to the nation, causing the normal man to escape from Ireland as soon as he can. Cruelty and immorality are not native Irish characteristics, but when a cardinal makes thought a crime, "organisation"

supersedes intellect, and by the better nature of man, which declines to be "organised", it is always easier to organise his vices than his virtues, putting the worst of him in evidence to the world, and crushing the best of him, merely that the "great men" and the greater women may scream to distinction at the expense of religion, decency, and nationality.

Sinn Fein has produced economists! They teach the rebels to buy in the dearest market and to sell in the cheapest, which has at least the merit of helping to put an end to themselves. Under this teaching, the rebels buy Irish products at more than their market value, but the gain is wholly to the producers, and these are almost wholly "Unionist bigots", who will not even advertise in the Sinn Fein papers. Some have already made big fortunes out of it, and it is in reality a tax on rebels for the sole benefit of Unionists, but the gospel of passion and hatred which sets a "great man" organising a nation's vices to dominate its virtues will not let him see even the facts that make a fool of himself.

Yet my chief hope for Ireland is in Sinn Fein, relieved of its elaborate lunacy, informed by normal impulses, and working on the intellectual plane, with mind to think and with will to turn thought into constructive activities, in Ireland and for Ireland; but it cannot be until the individual is set free to work out the progress of his own life, for himself first, and for his country through himself, less consciously than by "organisation", and for that reason more vitally. The Irish Parliamentary Party were better at home feeding pigs, and the spirit that sets a Dublin clerk studying Irish after his day's work is more to a nation than a Parliament. No department of life can be fully efficient

without at least such organisation as may order energy; but we must learn to organise from free and efficient individuals into healthy and effective masses, instead of working in the opposite way, downwards, making organisation the end instead of the means, and menacing slaves into unhealthy mobs for the aggrandisement of dictators and the degradation of life. The study of the language is quite in this direction, and we are all for the language now—I have never heard of anyone committing murder or cutting off a cow's tail while engaged in a language lesson.

VIII.—Fission.

IN London of late I have met leading statesmen of various parties, all unanimous that no one could see what next for Ireland; some of them "in despair", and some confessing "chaos", but not one ready to recognise the ancient fallacy of trying to make the Keltic circle coincide with the Saxon square. One cannot but envy the simplicity of mind that survives in a first-rate British statesman after thirty years of Parliamentary life, and I sympathise with him now that he "has not the least idea" how to legislate the really excellent intentions and the kindness of heart that he is always ready to offer us, even in Coercion Acts. The sarcasm is in the situation, not in me. His traditional rectangulations are simply getting lost among the increasing complexities of the Irish arabesque, in which Ireland is merely rediscovering her long-lost native order. There is really nothing new in

this absence of "the least idea", except the consciousness that it is absent, which is very promising. Has not Ireland always been governed by "policies" rather than by ideas, by traditional methods rather than by relevant reasons? It is chaos to the British mind simply because it is order to Ireland, and the two peoples are still trying to discover each other, with a little of the confusion that comes of meeting after mutual abuse in mutual ignorance.

The rectangle never can mix very intimately in the arabesque without disfigurement to one or both, and an empire, properly so considered, had better afford freedom for psychological variety in her collective units, else friction eats a hole in the structure sooner or later; and since empires are not mathematical or theological definitions, eternally fixed, but human growths, necessarily subject to change, and always potential in developments indeterminable at any given time, I see no reason why the relations between Great Britain and Ireland may not yet produce a useful precedent in Imperialism. The very peculiar factors in the problem suggest new data in Imperial ethics, worthy of profound study on more than Irish grounds; and I see no reason why civilisations should decay and die, like individual organisms, as they appear to do, if they kept themselves sufficiently aware of the potential, which justifies itself in the social progress of the world every day. With nations as with men, we often find that the ugliest things we have to face are the fullest of hope ahead, and if we but afford fair play mutually for our better natures, there is no telling what may come with time, or how soon the time may come. Instead of that, however, we set up tyrannies of words, and we organise our worst passions around these, substituting

violence for reflection in an age of reason, and reducing a problem which is fascinating in its intellectual interests to the methods of Mrs. Moriarty. For the present I suggest that we direct criticism on those who derive their distinction from organising the worst that is in us against one another on both sides of the Channel.

I have not yet met Mr. Redmond, who would no doubt require a political dispensation from the Cardinal for such a dangerous step, and the red hat has not yet quite recovered from the loss of its blue ribbon in our recent race. Meanwhile, the fog is not thicker at Westminster than in Ireland, where the parish priest, after consultation with his bishop, attends the League meeting, and denounces Mr. Birrell's ingenuous trap as "an insult to Oireland", because of its one useful provision, the proposal to give the people Home Education in place of Rome Education. There is not a word against that clause in the priest's speech, which is eloquent on the "insult to Oireland"; and the lay delegate, unconscious of his Roman halter, and admiring his priest's "patriotism", goes to "sthrike a blow" at his democracy in the National Convention, where Mr. Redmond deserts Calvin at the last moment, in terror of the "Scarlet Woman". The priest always appeals to "patriotism" when he wants to kill education. Poor "Oireland"!

Here again we have the rebel as the priest's instrument between the nation and the Empire. The Empire and the nation are not yet even acquainted with each other. They have never met before. The Empire knows only the rebel and the priest; the nation is still mute and neutral, waiting to recover the use of her mind and will from the priest's dominion, financed by the Empire at the nation's expense. Sinn Fein, playing

the priest's game, makes out John Bull to be "immoral" and generally objectionable, a most deliberate lie, to prolong the enmity of two peoples for the benefit of those that live by the follies of both. Sinn Fein would not have us "a British province, never"! Yet we may become an Italian parish, and Sinn Fein is silent. The rebel is worth much to the priest, ready to be sold over and over again in every crisis, as at the passing of the Union.* Without rebels, the priest could have no such claim on the Imperial purse, no such sway in educational finance and the mental dominion that follows it. These two peoples must some day understand each other, or the weaker must die out. Yet it is not easy. The priest and his rebel come between, like the trade union leaders, but with the difference that the latter can be dismissed if they betray the men. A high peasant proportion in the structure of a nation makes it more a prey to the "leader", and the danger is doubled when the education of the peasants is directed by privilege to secure their obedience rather than to emancipate their judgment. Democracy! It has little meaning in Ireland. Mr. Redmond might with more representative propriety come to Parliament for the General of the Jesuits, introduced to "Misther Spaker" by a Nonconformist Front Bench.

Thirty years of resolute ruin and of organised inanity, with bullocks improved and men degraded, with priests pampered and religion starved, with "Nationality" dominant and the Nation nearly dead — these are obvious enough even for peasants; and now their sons, at least in the towns, are beginning a new rebellion, against their own tyrannies, which have always been

* See Dr. Ardill's new book, "The Closing of the Irish Parliament." Hodges, Figgis and Co.

the basis of the other tyrannies. A new leaven sets up its ferment in the old mass. Ideas have already begun to challenge organisations. Conscious rights assert themselves against privileged wrongs. The leagues live shorter lives, and "split" into more numerous subdivisions. We have added philology, folk-lore and economics to the new causes of cleavage, and masses have but to be sufficiently subdivided to end in the free individualism which alone can make organisation sanely useful to society. We have not enough individualism to be effectively collective.

In the last resort, however, the Irishman is a human being, not merely a political machine. He wants the freedom that makes faculty serve existence, to obey the laws of his being, to realise himself, to reproduce himself, to build the progress of his country in his own. Secure him in the possession and control of his faculties, and he will achieve these things at home, as he does elsewhere. Permit him to see the economy of his self-preservation, which is more to all men than party politics, and he must be found a help instead of a hindrance to the economy of Government; a unit in a greater nationality than he has now, and no longer "led" to destroy himself in the impossible task of destroying his invulnerable "inimy".

A very representative writer in the Dublin "Independent" deplores the "pitiful" tendency to subdivision in the mobs, and pleads for "re-union"; but the head of every mob, and of every sub-mob, wants to be the biggest head of all; every "great leader" wants himself as king to any "united nation"; which is individualism, almost insanely egoistic, but still individualism, wanting only experience to realise itself in constructive order. As yet it is "chaos",

but most promising chaos. We are a sociological chrysalis.

There is hardly a town, however small, without its group of "anti-Clericals", who are generally better Catholics than the priest, and for that the more certain to modify his dominion. They are finding out in spite of him that they are the Church as much as he, that their liberties under canon law are even wider than his own, and that he has no right to settle their opinions for them, even in religion, which rests with higher authority than he can exercise. They are grasping the truth, reasserted by the Pope, that liberty, even the liberty to do wrong, is recognised by their religion, and that the Church can pronounce it licence only after the infringement, not before, which shows Catholicism, in its integrity, to be as broad as other creeds. They are rapidly realising the damage to their religion, and through it to themselves, by making it a tyranny, and the new responsibility is already revealing a new character in them. They may be few, but they are real, and growing rapidly. They had hardly any existence at all seven years ago. They have begun to read the Bible! Months ago Mr. Conor O'Kelly M.P. confessed it at Claremorris, and the threatened "curse" has not yet fallen on that famous town. In the long run, it is impossible for the priest to crush a Catholic for being a better Catholic than the priest, and the more such Catholics there are to be crushed, the more obvious becomes the impossibility. There can hardly be a stronger proof of the essentials of religion in the Irish nature than the fact that the priest has not made atheists of the people, which gives one hope that they can face facts without infidelity. As Archbishop McHale anticipated, they

have kept religion alive "in spite of the priest". Clearly, Clericalism, the greatest of all our organisations, is subdividing, and making Catholicism possible, as the disintegration of Nationalism is making a nation possible.

Twenty years ago one league was enough, but now there are many, the nation discovering that it has more appetites than one, and all are subdividing. The United Irish League is subdividing. Its "great men" have now to run after the people to the fairs and markets in order to get a meeting. Mr. John Dillon's "Demonstrations" are now held in a room at the workhouse, or in one of the public-houses. The peasant will leave his plough no more to hear "honest John", and as to the smaller "great men" they have to be kept in Dublin and London for fear of "giving the show away". The grass trouble in Galway and Roscommon is reviving the League rather than caused by it. It arises from the feeling that man has more claim to Nature than the beast, a right feeling, however wrongly asserted; and this prevalence of passion over reason is natural enough in a people never permitted to think. Will is not yet dead; give it mind, and we get a real nation.

Sinn Fein is subdividing. Hatred, as a gospel of salvation, is an exhausting thing to keep up for any length of time, even with the assistance of the clergy, and passion can preclude reason only to a certain degree without making maniacs. The better men in the movement are already considering how far good energy ought to be thrown away on the obviously impossible—another discovery that might have been made before this time by a gifted race if they had been in the enjoyment of their faculties.

The Gaelic League is subdividing. Some would add a gospel of work to the gospel of words, and that is not the only line of fission. A conflict between the clerical and lay sections on the Council is avoided at this moment only by the lay members giving way to the tyranny of the clerics, who thereby stand to dominate the organisation or to destroy it. The destruction is avoided only by compromising with the dominion, and the cleavage in the Council is represented outside. Is it not wonderful how the priest manages to get himself on top of every force set moving in the interest of life and liberty?

The Orange organisation is subdividing, with over seventy lodges of the Independent order already pledged to liberalise the brotherhood by turning from current bigotries to original principles and purposes, in the same way as the Catholic laymen have begun introducing the priest to Christianity; and in proportion as the Catholic majority learn to defend their own liberties against the priest, the Protestant minority learn to trust them, setting human nature to correct its own guide, and revealing constructive unanimities in place of the passions so long fostered to secure the privileges of the few in the conflicts of the many. Nationalist agitating has been no more a profession than Unionist place-hunting, and has put no more Hibernian dust into the Imperial eye.

Unionism is subdividing, not for Separation, but rather to prevent it, making Union possible, combining with Nationalism in so far as Nationalism escapes from the leagues and becomes constitutional. Under Unionism, the landlord has been confiscated, without benefit to the tenant but with the rents marked down 40 per cent. by "law and order"; the tenant has been

coerced and harassed, without benefit to the landlord; and all have been shamefully overtaxed, without benefit to the State, but with the excess swallowed up in the necessarily increased expensiveness of government and the necessarily reduced efficiency of administration. All are beginning to ask whether Union cannot be put on some basis less ruinous to everybody. Landlords ask themselves what worse than confiscation could Home Rule do, and tenants ask themselves how much more could they emigrate. It is found that "loyal Ulster" is paying a bigger number of "years' purchase" for the farms than the "rebel" regions, where even the mechanism of government, under Unionism, is used to destroy the landlord's property in his land before buying him out. Behind these new cross-lights we have the material for a practicable public opinion, a new order of Nationalism, as much opposed to Separation as to the régime that has wrought so much ruin. Here is hope, if the rebel and the priest can be kept out of the saddle—but they are already prepared to mount, one behind the other. Nationalism, free and informed, wants to be in the empire, but neither confiscated nor coerced under the terms. My ideal of an empire is an association of nationalities for the common good, in which the nation gives up the liberty to harm the empire, in which the empire gives up the liberty to harm the nation, and in which all give up to their joint authority the liberty to harm one another. On the other hand separation means the end of Irish nationality.

At this rate, what must become of those that live by "leading"? To make mobs is one thing, but to make a nation is another, requiring a higher kind of man. As the nation discovers her inherent unities, and as the

people recover the use of their faculties, "organising" becomes a precarious profession; the nation is then a combination of free and efficient units, no longer a mass of drilled slaves making "statesmen" of episcopal publicans. The priest threatens to "curse"! The "Freeman's Journal" "lets down her back hair and shrieks". The Gaelic League shouts that "There is nothing like leather", unless philology, and Sinn Fein utters a penny scream. Mr. D. P. Moran puts a stick in his ink-pot, and Mr. Sheehy Skeffington, as if in fear that he may not even lead himself, writes an Irish article on German politics. The place-hunting Orangeman (old style) pulls himself up in tortured scorn at the name of Lindsay Crawford, who multiplies the circulation of his new Orange paper, the "Ulster Guardian", by at least nine in less than a year. It is the biology of sociology and the alarm of the mother microbes, who, having forgotten the dual principle in procreation, dread the atrophy of their metabolism, and dare not face the inevitable transition to the individualistic alternative; Banba barren! the microscope turned on, and confusion of the dignities that have presided over her advancing death. I have no apology for my share in such a "chaos". The collective process has been so long and so exclusively pursued, with such profit to the few who "farmed" it, and such ruin to all the rest, that there is not enough individualism left to make the material for anything usefully collective; and those of the race that still survive have begun to see that they cannot be eternally mothered by Fathers that can have no child of their own. It is the revolt of Life from the agencies of its arrested development, and instead of "despairing", or even doubting, we may well welcome a normal restoration of men to the use of

their faculties, and of a nation to a knowledge of her interests. Then her Government will need no superhuman "wit", and its efficiency at work will be seen as a greater matter than the geography of its location.

One great historic blunder has run through all things in Ireland, ignoring the fact that organisation could be no better than the character of its average unit; and all these "combinations", instead of appealing to efficient faculty, free to combine, which alone could make combination useful in the circumstances, relied rather on the survival of the communistic habit of mind, which appealed to authority instead of faculty, putting the tyranny of numbers over the functions of free judgment, and thereby crushing the character which alone could realise liberty, with the priest always as the head of the tribe, and his privilege fortified by a double derivation, from the ruined throne of the departed chief, and from that higher Throne before which he has now to answer for his great, cruel share in the ruin of a race that have done so much for the mission of Christ to mankind.

Even Sir Horace Plunkett appears to have made the same blunder with his co-operation, forgetting that in Great Britain co-operation had prospered precisely in proportion to the free individualism already realised in the various regions; and we have the fallacy stereotyped in the Congested Districts Board, which pays people out of taxation for doing their own work, and even for learning how to do it. In some places, the peasant's family have to be financially induced to come and learn the industries that are started for them by the Board.

I am not surprised at the Irish fog that hangs now

over the Westminster mind. When one nation undertakes to govern another, and that other has not the use of its mind and will, then constitutional method becomes difficult; and the British way has been to employ the most dominant tryanny that could be found among the Irish against one another. Britain began with the priest in Early Norman times, and worked him well down to the Reformation, after which she substituted her own lay planters, Tudor, Jacobite and Cromwellian; and once again, the priest, having beaten the Territorialists, becomes Lord Randolph Churchill's missing link in the Imperial chain, with the landlords' mansions turning into nunneries and monasteries, and the layman still looking on in wonder whether his own time can ever come. Never while he remains a futile rebel or a priest's instrument. What is to be the next workable tyranny in Ireland? Nobody has "the least idea", because we Irish are now attacking our own tyrannies, the best bit of Sinn Feinism ever yet attempted by us. The British statesman reminds me of Mark Twain's dog, who, having beaten all dogs by chewing their hind legs, met a dog that had no hind legs, and looked up in puzzled pathos to his master. It is hopeful, very very hopeful. Once the British statesman does not know what to do, there is a chance that he may do right, and he would prefer that, in spite of his Irish record.

IX.—Politics.

I YIELD to no man in my ignorance of party politics, for which excellent reason I claim a special value for my political opinions, due to my startling Irish discovery that opinion has some relation to truth, an innovation as daring as it is true, which has made me famous all over Ireland, with my name in the categories of distinguished men, my purse inflated to the noblest standards of virtue rewarded, and the very princes of the Church taking a particular interest in my immortality, which affords me the peace and security of spirit to exploit the utmost profit of cheap fame. If Ireland enables a man to achieve all this by sheer ignorance, what may we not achieve by knowledge? Truly, "there is no land like Ireland anywhere at all" for the profitable originality of the obvious, and I wonder gentlemen of Fleet Street, so much abler than I, do not discover Ireland more often and more thoroughly. I should write this chapter about Irish political opinion, and not about my own, but for the fact that there is no political opinion in Ireland, where everybody is too much a politician to permit political opinion.

In the discussion after my lecture in Dublin last spring a speaker gave us a well-established account of a League meeting in the time of the Parnell split, with the two priests of the parish at it, one for Parnell and the other against him. The reverend gentleman against Parnell made a great oration, and then said to the audience, "All of ye agin' Parnell, come to this side of the room". They all came over. Then the other reverend gentleman made a great oration, and

said, "All of ye in favour of Parnell, come back to where ye were". They all came back. Perdition cancels itself in this way every day everywhere in Ireland, and yet the fear of it remains to make thought impossible, and their faculties useless to the Irish people. A case personally known to me occurs in a family of my acquaintance. After a long and cruel boycotting, led by the parish priest, the father broke down, and was told unanimously by the doctors that the boycotting had done it. He never recovered, and he died declaring that the priest had caused his death. The mother had suffered, and her turn came soon. On her death-bed she was asked, "Shall we send for the priest?" and replied, "I believe God will forgive me for preferring to die without the help of the man that killed my husband".

Only Catholics know fully what this means, and yet they permit these horrible uses to be made of their religion. That particular priest is still in his sacred office, and still making the same use of it, with the bishop's full knowledge, and with some claims to become a bishop himself! I can establish facts of the kind in every parish I know in Ireland. It is anti-Christian; therefore, anti-Catholic, with the responsibility on the priest, not on the religion. I can have no sort of pleasure in the pain which these facts must be to many of my readers, and most to the best of them, but they go to the very bottom of the Irish problem, and I feel that my work is no more than a sham if I evade them. I can only hope to say no more than is necessary to my purpose, and no more unpleasantly than I can help. Many of the facts known to me are too nasty to be printed at all, though as relevant to freedom in Ireland as any I have stated.

How can a people have the use of their faculties, for government or for anything else, where the exercise of their minds in their own affairs can only bring them torture?

A Constitution is demanded for Ireland, "an Independent Parliament, with an Executive responsible to it". Up to a point, this is a constitutional proposition, but who is to accept the new Constitution, if granted, Cardinal Logue or his deputy, Mr. Redmond? Obviously not the people, in any case, and yet, apart from the people, the proposition has no meaning in terms of Democracy. The acceptance of a Constitution, to have it at all constitutional, implies the free opinion of the people, both in accepting and in working it; but we know that the priest permits no such free opinion in the people. Let us, if it be thought good, institute a Chartered Company of trading priests as a Government for Ireland, but let us understand what we are doing, and not charter such a company in the name of constitutional government, when we know quite well that the free opinion essential to any constitutional proposition is made quite impossible by the priest. The Government of Ireland now differs little in effect from a Chartered Company of priests, but that fact is not argued as a ground for enlarging their Charter, and all sides are agreed that a change of some sort is required.

So much as to the accepting, and now a word as to the working of "an independent Parliament, &c.". If the priest, as priest, sets the citizen to destroy his neighbour, which he does every day, what is to prevent him from setting the citizen to destroy the Constitution, or the Constitution to destroy the citizen; and what is to prevent him from getting the Constitution worked for his own ends, as against those of the public good,

which cannot well be identical with his own ends in so far as he sets the citizens destroying each other? If he dictate almost all political opinion, as he does, it follows that he directs almost all political action; and with a whole Constitution at his command in these conditions, he is obviously provided with an enormously increased power to get the citizens destroyed by one another at his bidding. He works at this destruction now, before the eyes of us all, often with the British Government of Ireland as his instrument; why should he not work at it then, still more, with an Irish Government of Ireland as his instrument? It is most plain, indeed, that the priest now makes anything like Home Rule constitutionally impossible; and yet the Irish laymen demanding Home Rule in Parliament dare not tell their constituents how he stands in the way, because he is in a position to dictate their own destruction also, and has done it wherever the need has appeared to him. The moral depth to which men can sink in irresponsibility privileged by religion is one of the world's wonders and one of the greatest dangers to religion, but not more wonderful and not more dangerous than that the Church most reputed for human wisdom should persistently damage her own highest interests in such a manner, repelling the higher character and the nobler thought of mankind from her communion to associate Catholicism with mediocrity more and more, by methods as much opposed to Christianity and to her own doctrines as they are characteristic of her secular administration, which falls lower everywhere in almost exact proportion as the moral sense and civil liberty of the people permit the secular power of the priest to go higher. See how much better her ministry is in Great Britain than in Ireland, and in Germany than

in France. There is no more devoted priest than the Catholic priest wherever the people develop enough character to keep him in his place.

The least questionable explanation afforded by history is the persistence of an administrative structure unchanged from mediæval to modern conditions, which, in our day, gives to the peasant priest of Mayo, in peace, a power as nearly absolute as to the cardinal prince of old Byzantium, in war. I know a priest now ministering in Connacht who is guilty of manslaughter, with the facts admitted by one of the medical men who, at his mercy, helped to cover his escape red-handed from the crime. The license of privilege under the claim of divine sanction is one of the greatest dangers to spiritual and civil life alike, and it is not much over half a century since "Brother Prince", starting in the ministry of the Church of England, developed this prerogative of his own holiness until he was seen driving in the streets of Paris with a golden coach and four white horses, as a new "Messiah". That may sound far-fetched, but it is merely a fact, and a far more harmless fact than manslaughter, as we have it privileged in Connacht. I would much rather see Cardinal Logue with a golden coach and ten white horses in Paris, or even farther east, than trying to prevent real Irishmen from earning their living at home in Ireland; and I would not mind providing a couple of the horses as a gift if he undertook to become an emigrant "Messiah" to-morrow.

A learned friend of mine, an eminent lawyer, replies to all this: "If Ireland has any right at all to Home Rule, she has a right to place the priest as she likes under it." No one has a right to do anything that is bad for society or for religion, and my case is that

Britain has no right to place the priest as *he* likes, *over* it, and that she cannot possibly place him otherwise while he suspends the whole constitutional process, dictating all political opinion, and thereby necessarily directing all political action, to make the State itself a sort of ecclesiastical appendage, as it was over half of Europe not so long ago, with the kings as the playthings of the priests, a dagger concealed in every other surplice, and liberty left to groan while the game lasted. "An independent Parliament" in Ireland, "with an Executive responsible to it", is simply turning back to the old order until such time as the Irish people turn forward to a constitutional view of their destiny, with the freedom of the individual rescued from the cleric, the freedom of the constitution from the rebel, and the freedom of religion from the bigot. The time to do this is now; the place is Ireland, and legislation for Ireland by Irishmen waits on the doing. If we want Home Rule, why not start? It is simply stupid to discuss it on a basis that enables a priest to kill a man with impunity, and to go on offering up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on his retrospect of privileged homicide.

It was possible to treat with the Boer rebel constitutionally, because he had the use of his mind and will, and General Botha, having no foreign hierarchy to frighten him, gets his Parliament; but the Irish rebel, having given up his mind and will to the clergy, is not in a position to treat for a Parliament, or for anything of the kind, and Mr. Redmond loses his leadership of "the Irish race at home and abroad" if he dares to claim a voice for Irish parents in the education of their own children. If we want to argue the colonial analogy, why not put the priest in the

colonial position? If we want a domestic Parliament within the Empire, why demand it on a basis of rebellion? The tragedy of it is that the distinct character and needs of the Irish people do require distinct legislation, but may not have it because the cleric and the rebel stand in the way, destroying the nation every day. There can be no question as to the readiness of the British to start a Parliament in Ireland, with the rebel and the priest in their places, but meantime the right to live has to be preserved, and Ireland is not able to assert this right against clericalism.

Every member of Mr. Redmond's party with whom I am acquainted agrees with me about these things, and some of them say that Mr. Redmond himself agrees with me; but they all plead that if they attack the priest's dominion now, he will destroy "the National Movement", again confessing that Home Rule, on the present footing, is a clerical affair, to be accepted in so far as the cleric may dominate it, and damned in so far as the people may claim rights in it. By "the National Movement" they mean simply themselves, the Irish Parliamentary party, whose very existence as a party, elected and directed by the priests alone, is an organised negation of nationality in Ireland. They stand not merely to misrepresent nationality, but actually to oppose it, making the national will a clerical asset, with its final disposition in Italy, and not in Ireland. On the other hand, Perdition does permit the Unionists to say really what they think about their country, without regard to Italian veto, which makes them essentially more representative of Irish nationality, no matter what their opinions, or how we may differ from them; and so it comes about that the Unionists in Parliament are the Nationalists, and that

the Nationalists in Parliament are rather Italians. I do not agree with what the Unionists think and say about their country, but it is obvious that their opinions must be more representative of the Irish nation than if dictated from Perdition and directed from Italy. Is not that really why Lord Randolph Churchill set out to "govern Ireland through the bishops"? It was rough on "loyal Ulster", but the bishops had originated the need, at a time when the rebel required the imperial muzzle at their hands more than now. This ugly thing known as Parliamentary Nationalism is no more national than the uglier thing corrupting and directing it is religion. Both are no better than a traffic in the principles for which they stand, making life the instrument of organisations instead of having organisations as the instruments of life, which is always the result of "organising" a people on any other ground than that of their free opinion and their free will.

Since the Catholics of Ireland dare not have political opinions, it follows that they have no right to speak for Irish nationality, a right which belongs rather to the Protestants alone, because they dare to have political opinions. Politically, the Catholics can hardly be said to exist at all, having given up their right to have political opinions. For like reasons, the loyalty or disloyalty of the Catholics does not matter; what matters is the will of the priests and bishops, who hold the Catholics as their political stock-in-trade, to be commercialised at their own convenience, according to the terms they can make with the imperial purse. The only loyalty or disloyalty in Ireland that really matters is that of the Protestant, who, when he turns rebel, means it, and has no priesthood that can be bribed to

terrorise him. Up to now, the Protestants have been "loyal" mainly because the British have employed and privileged them to trample on the Catholics; but can such loyalty last, now that "England in Ireland is nothing but the Pope's policeman"? England has no longer any use for our Protestant loyalist, who has quite failed to overcome the rebel; and she finds it better to subsidise the priest, over the Protestant loyalist's head, because the priest can get at the rebel's immortal soul, which the Protestant loyalist never could do. The Protestant still proclaims his loyalty to Dublin Castle, but Dublin Castle obeys the Roman priest, throwing Calvin into the arms of "the Scarlet Woman" before the shocked gaze of the whole world. There is need for the Protestant loyalist to open his eyes, and should he do so we might see the future of Ireland with a Nationalist Ulster, supported by such Catholics as would dare to have political opinions in spite of the priest. I expect some such hopeful re-arrangement of forces to arise out of the disintegration that is now at work in all our organised bigotries, and it might have arisen long ago but for gentlemen like Mr. John Redmond, who accept pay from clericalism to make nationality impossible. The money subscribed in Ireland for Mr. Redmond's party is in effect a clerical fund to buy members of Parliament against the national freedom of the Irish people, so that the energies of the nation may remain as clerical assets—in so far as they survive. Should the Protestants turn Nationalist, which they would do at once but for the priests, then Nationalism would mean something, and the British would have to face an Irish force to which all others are as play. The Catholic rebel can never be more than a humbug; the Protestant rebel means

business. It is the difference between a man who has the use of his mind and a man who has not.

There is really no need any longer for Britain to pay such a big price, at the expense of Irish liberty and of British dignity, for the service of "the Scarlet Woman" to "lay hands on" the rebel and bring his immortal soul inside the economy of imperial convenience. Let Britain address herself directly to our rebel, as she did to the Boers, and let "the Scarlet Woman" attend to the convenience of the rebel's immortality, her proper business: a division of labour which could not but economise energy in both worlds, also setting human beings on both sides of the Irish Sea free to look each other in the face as human beings, to see how very much they have in common, and their mutual need to compromise the very little that remains. Britain can never govern Ireland with comfort or justice, though she may with safety, by employing Ireland's tyrannies against one another, at Ireland's expense; and Ireland can never govern herself on any constitutional terms until she face her own tyrannies and reduce these so that they may not be worth employing against her. When Ireland presents herself constitutionally as a nation, and not as a kind of big nunnery of both sexes, politically drilled into civic incapability by clerics, then, and not till then, her claim to a Constitution comes within constitutional terms! I can trust my security to the heart of a free people, never to the caprices of an enslaved mob led by a tyrant who is distrusted by the very instincts of self-preservation.

Secular opinion struggles free from the cleric, but here comes another phase of the perversity that seems to hang ever over Ireland. In so far as the Nationalists rebel against the priests, they rebel still more against the

British connexion, thereby perpetuating bad government for Ireland, and the need to subsidise the cleric as its instrument. Impulse sets the rebel free from the cleric, but intellect does not as yet show him that he can only kill what remains of his nation by his rebellion. Thus we are left with only rebels on the one hand or clerics and their nominees on the other to accept "an independent Parliament, with an Executive responsible to it". Behind both gangs we have the real Irish nation, sane and trustworthy, but silenced by the organisations, practically disfranchised by the bishops, and not in a position to treat constitutionally for any development in their legislative destiny. How can we make that mass constitutionally articulate? Give them a free man for a schoolmaster, and trust to human nature. It looks as if Mr. Birrell had seen the point, and tried to "get round it". Why not try the frontal attack? An Irish Education Bill setting the schoolmaster free from the priest would be extremely interesting just now in the House of Commons. It would be so popular in Ireland that Mr. Redmond would be expected to support it, and I have no doubt Mr. Birrell would be interested in the result between Mr. Redmond and the bishops. If Mr. Birrell likes, I'll draft this new Bill for him, and only he and myself need know anything about it. Let us always keep in view the fact that a people who are fit for Home Rule must be fit for Home Education.

Why do Irish Nationalists not face a few of the determining facts? Ireland's destiny is in the Empire. She cannot get out of it. The Empire cannot allow her to get out. By trying to get out she can only destroy herself within, which she is doing. These facts are permanently unalterable; why not proceed accordingly?

The Irish Parliamentary party say they want Ireland in the Empire, and they take the oath of allegiance to the King; then, why do they cheer the King's enemies and take pleasure in harm to the Empire? If we must have a rebellion, why not fight, get it over, and settle down to something sane and definite, as the Boers are doing? Why not one thing or the other? If not rebellion, then, why not constitutionalism, on some practicable terms? Some think that the Irish Party would be rather shocked by the passing of Home Rule, and it is not easy to see how it could provide any such pretty posts for them as they have at present. By going to Parliament, a man can earn £300 a year who is not worth 15*s*. a week in any useful occupation.

For over twenty years the Irish party, while swearing allegiance to the Sovereign, have boasted that they would "make the government of Ireland impossible". They have not made it impossible; they have only made it very expensive, at Ireland's expense, and as bad as it is expensive. As I understand honesty, an honest man will not swear loyalty while at heart a rebel. What need to swear? The oath makes the rebel also a traitor, and though we may respect honest rebels, no one can respect any sort of traitor. The rebel who swears allegiance to the King is a traitor either to Ireland or to the King—if not to both. As a Catholic, he is also behaving most immorally against the doctrines of his religion, if not actually guilty of mortal sin—how do the bishops get all their parliamentary publicans absolved? Mr. Redmond himself seems to be a rebel or a loyalist according to the side of the Atlantic on which he happens to speak, and there is nothing in his religion to make morality a

merely geographical term. The thing is poor, even as acting; as statesmanship it is wholly despicable, and Ireland is the sole sufferer. She is shamefully over-taxed, but the loyalty-swearing rebels make the Government so expensive that the predominant partner has not a penny profit out of the over-taxation, though it amounts to millions sterling in the year, impoverishing the nation in the name of nationality. In effect, the policy of the Irish Party is a policy of permanent war, which no nation can survive, and the over-taxation goes in paying officials to look after patriots who make silly speeches to audiences even sillier than themselves. The presence of each rebel in the country implies so much more costly officialism to look after him, and he can make no conceivable return for his cost to the taxpayer.

The next of our organised illusions is that "the British will concede nothing but by pressure", and "pressure" means threat; but the plain fact is that the British will concede nothing to threat except by despising it, which is a greater insult than refusal. Why ask John Bull to strengthen the hands of an avowed enemy at his door? Is he such a fool, or are those who expect him to do it? It is hard enough to love an enemy; it is impossible to strengthen and to arm him. I am sorry for the people who make a "national policy" of assuming John Bull to be either a coward or a fool, and Ireland in Parliament is committed to the assumption that he is either or both.

The confidential view of Mr. Redmond is that he wants Home Rule, and relies on it to break down the power of the priest; in other words, that he is prepared to lead an anti-clerical campaign in an Irish Parliament; but there is more need for such a campaign

now, and he dares not face it. Many honest men believe that an Irish Parliament, even now, would defeat the priest, secure the minority, discover a better class of men in political life, put down the rebel, and so make constitutional government possible, with advantage to the Empire as well as Ireland; but it is only a belief, a sadly speculative one, and we have to face the fact that the demand for an Irish Parliament without a possibility of free opinion among those for whom it is demanded is inherently so unconstitutional as to be an insult to intelligent statesmanship. All the British can do is to wait and see whether the Irish can dare to have opinions, in accordance with the demand they make, and if Irish nationality cannot survive a struggle for the Irishman's right to free opinion in Ireland, then the sooner there is an end of Irish nationality the better, because Life is of more importance than politics. The test is a fair one, the need to apply it is imperative, and nothing in any direction could be lost by it. Our minorities could trust our majorities if our majorities could trust themselves, but that cannot be without free opinion. The first essential step towards any improvement in Ireland is a higher sense of individual liberty among the Irish themselves, which none but themselves, by themselves and for themselves, can ever achieve. In the meantime they destroy the nation to accommodate "Nationalism." It is a great loss to both countries that all British parties do not definitely and permanently lay down these two things as essentials preparatory to any suggestion of an Irish Parliament: (1) the freedom of the individual and of his opinions in Ireland; (2) the elimination of the rebel from popularity in politics. Sane statesmanship

cannot be asked either to compound felony or to treat with those who dare not have opinions. The presence of the rebel and the absence of free opinion are both in spite of the law as it stands, so that the law cannot be quoted as a hindrance to the conditions which I propose.

Now, exactly in proportion as it is Britain's need to weaken an avowed enemy, it would be her advantage to strengthen a proved friend, with all the increased strength that a people could derive from having their nationality expressed and developed in their legislation and government, a liberty which must be allowed to loyal nations within any democratic definition of an Empire; and it follows that, exactly in the same proportion, Ireland is simply committing national suicide by attempting Nationalism within the Empire on a basis of hostility and hatred, sacrificing all that could be to what never can be. The British people, Tories as much as Liberals, are not only ready, but most anxious, to encourage every possible development of Ireland, in her nationality, in her government, and in her life, in so far as the Irish themselves make it constitutionally possible; but that can never be without free opinion in Ireland or with rebellion to represent opinion in so far as it is set free. In this way the rebel and the priest are now at work destroying all that remains of Ireland and her nationality.

As to Ulster Unionism, Mr. E. V. Longworth's criticism in the SATURDAY REVIEW illustrates it very well. When, as a "Papist" I "abuse the priests" and make fun of the Parliamentarians, Mr. Longworth finds me "excellently qualified to judge"; but the moment I touch Unionism, it is "a great deal of mischief". That is Ulster Unionism, and I am grateful

to Mr. Longworth for his illustration. The painful facts I bring out do not excite his sympathy with Ireland, but rather his pleasure in seeing me against my own "side", setting one part of Ireland against another, and earning a reputation as a "traitor" among my own bigots. I quite decline to belong to any "side", the welfare of the nation being so much a better field for anyone who can see the human interest of the Irish problem. I am seeking the "great mischief" of a sane Ireland, above the bigotries, and I have mentioned the Orange lodges merely as a type. I repeat that the Protestants are turning Nationalist fully as fast as the Catholics throw off the political yoke of the priest, and it is only natural.

Ulster Unionism does not appeal to me, with its traditional standpoint of a privileged minority strutting to official dominion over an enslaved majority, and thereby setting up the corrupt precedent now copied by the priests so successfully under the pretext of "a majority" to support the imposition. Ireland varies her tyrannies over herself only to exchange one for another. Belfast does not appeal to me, with her one bookseller, her no drama, her commercialised Calvinism and its cold grey eyes; her prayer-meetings in the front streets, her public-houses down the hidden lanes, and the nonconformist beards of her reverend Shagpats shaking out to double length in the north wind as a polemical criticism on the shaven servant of "the Scarlet Woman". Accept the Belfast standpoint, and everything we have ever known or loved as characteristically Irish falls dead. Belfast is a bit of Scotland that got lost, and fixed, before the Scotch had yet begun to make their virtues so tolerable and their vices so charming; and though I have no "side",

I confess to sympathies, which lie not that way. I would rather be a human being, unknown but normal, than Grand Master of the most magnificent Bigotry ever invented on the cold side of the Boyne.

Behind all these organised superficialities, as I have said, there still lies a unity of social consciousness that is essentially nationality, with Nature herself co-operating to perpetuate it. The natural habitat is such as to evolve a potent organism from any stock, and the natural environment is such as to make it permanently distinctive, in character, in feeling and in form. The most determined of our rebels and patriots come from British blood, and there will be a psychological distinctiveness in the dwellers of Ireland as long as the sun goes down across the fairy islands of Clew Bay, and hangs its opal pictures on the evening mists among the glinting gorges around Croagh Patrick, where the saints have walked and prayed through the midnights of history, and where romance presses Heaven itself into the spell that lingers in our lives to the ends of the earth.

X.—Religion.

So far, I have set down the facts as they affect life, but they leave much unexplained as regards the Irish priest. What is the genesis of him, qua priest? Why such gluttony of power, among the weak; and of wealth, among the generous poor, in the professional company of the martyrs? Why so puritanically un-Irish, imposing strange austerities on a naturally jolly

people, by a religion that is not austere? Why so vindictive, bred of a forgiving race, in a religion that lives to forgive? Why so sensitive to criticism, in a Church that commands criticism, for her own health, and that has stood the furies of nearly two thousand years? Above all, why does he sink so far below his own doctrines as to make these a weapon in vulgar conflict, a menace to liberty and a terror to life? No other religion among us has enough vitality to live at all, abused so badly by its own ministers; and their tyranny can no longer explain its persistence, in an age when tyranny revolts to antagonism more than it can menace to submission. It is not merely an Irish matter; it is the study of a universal force profoundly affecting mankind through Christianity.

From the earliest ages of history there appears to have been something more than usually supernatural in the Irish instinct; something more than the ordinary "faculty for realising the unseen", as Father Tom Burke calls it, perhaps an excess of mysticism from the humid imagery of the climate; and there appears to have been something more than usually harsh in Irish ways of translating the supernatural into objective morality, as if due to the high animal energies of a natural environment so entirely kind to life.

Our pagan ancestors in Ireland made their gods so great, and invested them with such power, that they had to murder their own children for sacrifices to them—which has always seemed to me rather unreasonable, seeing that they might easily have saved their children by creating their gods a little less great. I have no doubt those gods were all "sound Nationalists", perhaps also a kind of party politicians, "pledged" to "wrest" some manner of mystic Home Rule from the

unsympathetic statists of an invisible Imperialism; and we need not pass from our own time or plane to see human life sacrificed every day to its own arbitrary definitions, spiritual and secular. For aught I know, some writer in a more enlightened age of the future may compare my facts of to-day with those of the murdered children, and deny any great moral difference between our Irish fathers of the two periods. I have a feeling myself that it is a difference of convenience in method rather than of moral essence, but our own "Michael" may "chase me" again if I develop the point in detail, and I cannot start a new hunt before I have made up the results of the last. I had better leave it to that happier writer of the future above mentioned. Nihil obstat? I would not tempt the custodian of my immortality beyond the need for good fresh "copy".

Excessive holiness has always been a subtle danger to the lives of nations, always putting the saints so high above the sinners, in the sinners' business, thereby tending to keep them sinners, for the distinction of the saints, and also, of course, making it impossible for them to become efficient in their business; and long before the English came to Ireland, we had a priest "fasting three days" in preparation to "curse" "Tara of the Kings"; the King of Tara "fasting back", as Mr. McGinley puts it, to defeat the curse, and to preserve the lives of the sinners from the cruelties of the saints. The curse fell, and so did Tara, which facts I now present respectfully to the priests who join the Gaelic League pilgrimage to Tara every year. The curse has not prevented the grass growing in that royal region of classic Meath; but the fertility is only for the bullock, in the solitudes

that replace the palaces, and the industry that enabled *some* men to live, until Cardinal Logue suppressed it, was at Navan, only a few miles from Tara. I assume, of course, that there must be some theological and canonical difference between this destruction of the means by which our children lived at Navan and the destruction of the children themselves by our earlier priests. Priests do not destroy people for God's sake as a rule without official defence for it, though the ground for destroying industry remains less clear. Perhaps it is that if industry were permitted, men might exist in spite of the priest, but that is only my speculation, intended to suggest ideas, rather than to question the canonical right to destroy industry.

As I have shown, the priest prepared the way of the English dominion over Ireland, even packing the Irish episcopate with Englishmen, and though the Papal Bull making a present of Ireland to England has been denied, we find subsequent sovereigns claiming the English right to govern Ireland on the strength of it, thereby admitting its existence in condition and in effect, so much more important than the actual document. This continued down through the Norman period, on the pretext that the Irish were "savage", and required to be tamed by the Anglo-Roman alliance, after they had done so much to Christianise England and other parts of Europe; and the connexion was not quite finally cut until by Cromwell, when the priest definitely discovered himself to be a patriot, falling on the neck of the rebel. The alliance between the priest and the rebel arises simply from the need for their common defence under the Penal Laws, directed against both alike, but caused by the clerics; and it lasts precisely until the priest can with advantage get back to

his former and more paying alliance, with the British and against the rebel, which he is bringing about very fast, making the Irish nation his asset in return for taming her rebel conscience, but at the same time permitting just enough rebellion to continue the British need for his well-paid service, at Ireland's expense, while the nation and the religion go down together, with only a little over half the population surviving after fifty years, the most progressive period in the world's history. The three great curses of the Irish nation are the political priest, the sham rebel, and the British statesman. As to the Catholic religion, we are suffering rather from the want of it.

The ugliness of the thing gets on the nerves of the British, who in a lucid interval now and then attempt really to get the Irish educated, so that the two peoples might understand one another, and be at peace; but the priest, always on the look-out, sits on the scheme every time, knowing that he may lose his secular dominion over the fathers unless he has possession of the children, while his own bishop declares that he has "never received a true education", and is "deficient in a something which cultivates a sense of honour . . .". Whenever the priest kills education in this way, he takes care to do it for "patriotism", and we have "loud and prolonged cheers" from the rebels.

Irish historians are comparatively silent about the great part played by the priest himself in necessitating the Penal Laws against him, and hardly one at all among them recognises the primary origin of the whole trouble, in the secular policy of the Catholic Church, setting herself up as a temporal power, and even assuming to regulate the international affairs of the other temporal powers, with "Bell, Book and Candle"

to back a Papal army in pursuit of universal dominion over the secular rights of mankind. How amazingly opposed to the inspired humility of the Founder of the Church, Who explicitly declined all secular dominion, that He might the better found his divine mission in the hearts and souls of men!

Over a century ago, when the priest was emerging from the brutalities of the Penal Laws, which he had survived with truly Irish bravery, another calamity of his own derivation fell upon him, with Ireland again as the victim. His education in Ireland had been cruelly made a crime, and Maynooth wanted theologians badly when the French Revolution was routing the political surplus of French priests. The most objectionable would be the first to go, and a School of them came to Ireland, founding at Maynooth a kind of neo-Calvinistic cult known to the School men as "Jansenism"; a kind of theological thing that always seems to come out of the cold, usually from among the ice of Northern Europe, as unsuited to our warm-hearted Kelt and his smiling island as it was found ultimately to be opposed to the spirit of Catholicism. The priests of Ireland have had to deal with that ugly skeleton in their own cupboard for a whole century, and though they have won the victory, the trail of the invasion still remains, in the un-Irish, un-Catholic, and puritanical narrowness that has prevented the boys and girls dancing at the cross-roads, for example. Skipsey puts the thing well, though not thinking of it:—

"Is laughter sin? Ah then, full well
I know that you would curb my laughter,
And steep me in the heart of Hell
To save me from its lips hereafter."

So long and so terribly enslaved, our priest abuses power in his freedom; so long and so terribly impoverished, he grabs for money in his comfort; so long looked down upon by privilege, he is tempted by the access of privilege to look down in his turn. Our priest seems to be always either persecuting or getting persecuted as a result. The moral unity of things, which could balance him in his sacred responsibilities, has not yet come to him out of the chaos through which he has passed, and his limitations cause him to carry himself so clumsily that a new chaos awaits him unless he change his un-Catholic ways before it is too late.

His sensitiveness to criticism arises from his own shortcomings; but his increasing consciousness of these may be his salvation, and then he may see his friends in those whom he so carelessly calls his enemies now. It is not in the nature of things, human or divine, that he should be permitted to continue making religion a curse to a nation, and turning the very noblest virtues of a people into weapons for their own destruction. He knows well that he is doing this, and that he is enabled to do it only by dominating the intellectual energies of those who treat him so faithfully and so generously. He knows, if he thinks at all, that he stands at this moment as the essential hindrance between them and self-government, dominating the whole political machinery to make constitutional government impossible. Does he think it can be good for the religion to make such uses of it against the rights and the hopes of a nation?

I must not pass this point without reference to the ugly part played by Protestantism in bringing about the condition of things among the Catholics which

I have just described. There is a Chair of Irish in Trinity College, endowed to proselytise the Catholics through the native language, and only three years ago I saw some of the empty buildings in Connemara that had been put up by the Protestants to catch the Catholics by a bait of polemical porridge in times of famine. With all his faults (and I am frank enough about them !) our Keltic Papist never did mistake his stomach for his immortal soul, and the bait never "caught on"; but the organised attempt, long maintained and well financed, to make polemical profit out of the Papist's hunger started methods as wild, if less materialistic, among the Catholic priests, in self-defence, with the result that the average Catholic child of Connacht in our time is brought up in the abominally anti-Catholic belief that all Protestants must go to Hell ! Some Western bishops actually teach it still. Quite recently I asked one of our youthful theologians whether he thought Protestants could go to Heaven, and after some strikingly intelligent hesitation, he replied: "They will when they become Catholics." The poor little chap did not want them to go to the other place, and yet could not get over the authority of his teaching. Not even the behaviour of Cardinal Logue could have saddened me as much as the mental outlook of that little boy, and this is the sort of thing we get by a dominant minority founding a philological professoriate to cultivate Divinity through porridge. Is it any wonder that the Catholic priest should have been suspicious, or that his spiritual children should come into being disfigured by the ugly birth-marks of his own bigotry?

Clerical tyranny is by no means confined to the Catholics. The Church of Ireland clergyman tries it

often enough, in spite of the greater difficulties in his way, and a leading Irish Presbyterian tells me that Church is now dominated by an inner circle of "seven persons", while the Irish Wesleyans, contrary to Wesleyanism, have been steadily pushing out the lay-preacher, and concentrating the collective dignity on their own sacerdotal circle, pressing the ecclesiastical wedge between God and man, as in the mechanism of the more formal systems.

Catholicism implies not merely a spiritual consciousness subjectively derived and formulated in dogma, but also an ethical system objectively defined for a philosophy of life, and correlated with dogma to the spiritual consciousness; and since this ethical system starts of necessity from the absolute proposition of the Will of God for its primary postulate, it follows that its deductions and laws also tend to be absolute, as against the various secular systems of ethics, based inductively on human phenomena, and thereby bound to proceed by comparative data to their own inductions and laws. This department of study, known at seminaries like Maynooth as "scholastic philosophy", is, I understand, the one branch of purely mental training in which the Irish clergy stand high, indicating that they have given much attention to it, and that their habits of mind are likely to be shaped by it, not merely in religion, but also in their relations to life as men, inducing absolute or dogmatic tendencies in their opinions and in their will to have their opinions accepted, in secular affairs as well as in religion. I never knew any man who could quite dissociate the atmosphere of his intellectual past from his present judgments on things in general, or even from his temper in relation to the judgments of others; and since "Everything in *this* world is

comparative, my dear", as Mr. Sydney Grundy's roué truly observes, it follows that our priests come to us out of an absolute world to regulate a comparative one for us, which means inevitable mischief in so far as they exceed their own sphere.

For example, in our comparative world, compromise is a necessity of life, so that if life be directed in the absolute manner, which abhors compromise, it must suffer. Every Act of Parliament is in some measure a compromise; so is every man's life, a line somewhere between what he desires and what he can have. With a clergy so trained, and so powerful, and with "no laymen competent to teach at all", is it any wonder that the average Irish Catholic Nationalist should be incapable, as we have him, of the necessary compromise in considerations of legislation and government? Here again we see how the clergy prevent Home Rule, and how religion, wrongly used, can harm life, sacrificing the practicable to the impossible, because the practicable does not happen to satisfy the absolute standard or the notions derived from its influence on the mind. If the priest confined his absolute manner to religion, as religion intends, we should have no trouble; but the more absolute his manner, the more harm to us where it comes to dominate our comparative interests, not to mention how it prevents, and must prevent, the growth of our own faculties by experience in the control of our interests. No other religion, at least among Christians, starts a philosophy of life from such absolute postulates, which means that no other has so much power to harm a country when the legitimate limits are exceeded; and yet no other priest exceeds these limits to any such extent or with any such disastrous [illegible].

Religion of every kind, anywhere and always, has

proceeded by two chief methods: Persuasion, appealing to man's higher nature, which makes the process an education in itself; and Dictation, which regards man's higher nature rather as a nuisance, causing religion to defeat its own ends, crippling the man to make the believer. At first, Christianity had to depend wholly on the Persuasion, and then it was that the Church produced the Saints, or at least those of them much worth considering; but later, the clerics, having grown fat and lazy, employed kings and armies as the instruments of religion, substituting Dictation for Persuasion, providing salvation at the point of the sword, and lowering religion as much as the brain is above the bludgeon. The moral sense of our own times, emancipated and developed in spite of the creeds rather than by their means, struggles to restore religion to the higher method, and the progressive peoples are plainly the better for it; but the Irish priest relies on the terror of the slave rather than on the courage of the martyr, killing character to save it from doing wrong, instead of letting it grow and guiding it to do right in accordance with Catholic liberty. Ireland is like a child that has its young legs tied to prevent it from ever learning to walk, lest it should walk down the wrong street, which makes us a nation of mental and moral cripples, deriving our reputation for virtue from our incapacity to be either virtuous or vicious. The moral attitude is, "Do nothing rather than do wrong", but since no mortal can live without doing wrong, the nation dies out under its counsel of perfection, derived from our ethical absolution tinged with Jansen. This alleged singular virtue of ours in Ireland is really vice, a product of terror, killing our moral faculties instead of illuminating them, and we have the results to the

nation in its pain and decay, due to the inefficiency of faculty all round, with "religion" as the leading agency of our destruction. That is our priest's short cut to "morality". We make him fat, out of our hunger, and, in his spiritual laziness, he finds it easier to frighten us as slaves than to make us virtuous as free men, bringing the nation and the religion into contempt for his own convenience. That is what we Irish get by tolerating among ourselves a state of things in which the national mind and will do not belong to the nation, but rather to a few privileged persons and groups, who lead us to live on us, and who derive their distinction from our destruction.

Observe the profound psychology of Catholicism in laying hold of us at all the vital points, especially at the most vital, Birth, Love, and Death—which last is the most vital of all to any but the materialist. The Catholic mother has no sooner returned to normal consciousness in the birth-couch than she is faced with possibilities of eternal damnation for her little treasure until she gets in the priest. His control over "the master passion" is equally complete, placing him virtually in the position to give woman to man, to give man to woman, and to deny the gift at the smallest informality in his own relations to the issue, under pain of ostracism. We have to wait for him at the door of death, and give up our lives in double terror if he does not come. In short, we can neither Live, Love, nor Die without him; and then, think of one man, a mere man, sometimes a drunkard, commonly a gossip, bound by his calling to know the innermost secrets, good and bad, of virtue and of vice, in every man and woman in his parish! It is a very big power, and I select the adjective in its most [illegible] really fit to fill"

the office of a Catholic priest is the nearest thing to God on earth. Can a man properly discharge these responsibilities and be a party leader in the quarrels and conflicts of his parish?

Now, if people believe in religion at all, it is right that it should touch them intimately in their most vital interests; and if we grant this, it follows that the influence may rightly, and even necessarily, be exercised through personified authority, as in our priests. The defence seems to me rational, logical and complete, though honestly incomprehensible to so many educated minds. I quarrel not with these things, but when the priest, invested by divine ordinance with the awful powers I have described, calls the public together, as priest, denounces me to them, and calls on them to organise un-Christian cruelties against me for having expressed admittedly sincere convictions about my own secular business, admittedly not in any way contrary to religion or to morals; then, I am entitled to state, and I state it without subtlety of any sort, that, on the definition of his own office, he is making most criminal and most immoral uses of the highest privilege ever accorded by God to men, or by men to one another; and I add further that, to my knowledge, this dreadful thing is now done regularly, generally and deliberately in Ireland, with the results in the ruin of the people and their country.

How else could it be, in view of the position I have defined, filled by men who, according to their own bishop, have "never received a true education", and are "deficient in a something which cultivates a sense of honour"? Why do Irishmen subject themselves to such degradation? England owes much of her greatness to Englishmen refusing so to submit themselves. Let

Sinn Fein say what it will about "Irish Ireland", the fact remains that Ireland is not half English enough to be successfully Irish. Can she set free her strength and hold her religion? If not, it is the fault of the priest alone.

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